Communist Candidate

Why a Big Vote for Amter Is Vital

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ON THE COVER

Israel Amter

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NOV. 8, 1938

FIFTEEN CENTS

New MASSES

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Between Ourselves

IN ORDER that we may cover as much of the election results as possible, next week's issue of NEW MASSES will reach subscribers and newsstand readers a day later than usual.

What is widely regarded as this country's only original art form, American Negro music, will be the subject of a concert at Carnegie Hall in New York on December 23 under the auspices of NEW MASSES. We asked John Hammond, who is the veritable oracle of hot music, and authorities on Negro folk music, to plan for us a concert which would embrace all the significant trends, all the roots of developments of Negro music, in their proper chronology. And what we now have promises to be an evening of great discovery, a presentation that may well be to modern music what the Armory show of cubist painting in 1913 was to modern art.

The idea is to give musical New York an evening of American Negro music, not the warmed over, heavily arranged, symphonic stuff with which most people associate Negro musical forms, but the true, untainted, entirely original works that the American Negro has created. We mean spirituals sung in their primitive majesty, the way they are sung by Mitchell's Christian Singers, whom we are bringing from North Carolina for the concert. We mean work songs, chain gang chants, shouts, Holy Roller hymns sung by the unknown voices of the deltas and the cotton fields—the artists known only to explorers like Hammond and Alan Lomax. We mean blues the way Bessie Smith sang them, blues that will be sung by Bessie Smith's niece Ruby Smith. We mean minstrel music, one-man bands, jug virtuosi, and the tidal sweep of the four great boogie-woogie pianists who will appear that night. And we are not forgetting the climax—the swing music that used to be called hot and has two styles, Chicago and New Orleans, both of which are best played today by the fourteen pieces of Bill (Count) Basie, out of Kansas City via the Famous Door to our concert.

This is something that grew up unnoticed in America, the music that only a few enthusiasts really know but which has never been heard by a public, never gathered into an expository concert, rarely played above the Mason and Dixon Line. We are bringing performers from their native corners of the South, the Southwest, Kansas City, Chicago, and Harlem. We are calling this rare event: FROM SPIRITUALS TO SWING, AN EVENING OF AMERICAN NEGRO MUSIC. Friday, December 23, at Carnegie Hall.

Granville Hicks has just encountered a new and impressive form of literary criticism. He recently discovered that the assessment on his Grafton, N. Y., farm, where he wrote *I Like America,* had been increased. When he asked why, he was told, "There are some people here who don't like what you wrote."

Three radio broadcasts this coming week will feature Israel Amter, Communist candidate for congressman-at-large from New York State. Mr. Amter will speak Sunday, November 6, at 3:30 p.m., over Station WEAF in a state-wide hookup that includes Syracuse, Schenectady, Buffalo, and Rochester, on "The Republican-Tammany Outfit Shall Not Capture the State"; over Station WMCA, Friday, November 4, at 10 p.m., on "Why the Jewish People Must Vote Progressive"; and again over WMCA, Monday, November 7, 11:15 p.m., on "Labor and Progressives Unite Tomorrow." The last two speeches are part of the series of programs over WMCA sponsored by the New York State Communist Party. Other speakers in this series will be Charles Krumbein, Thursday, November 3, at 8:45 p.m., on "The Problems of Youth and the '38 Elections," and Isadore Begun, Sunday, November 6, 8:45 p.m., on "Tammany Does Not Represent the Bronx." Under the auspices of the recently organized Citizens Committee to work for the election of Amter, another broadcast has been arranged over WMCA, Saturday, November 5, at 8 p.m., when William Albertson, secretary-treasurer of Local 16, Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union, will speak; his subject is "A Trade Unionist Supports Israel Amter."

Who's Who

ANATOL RAPOPORT is a Chicago writer, lecturer, and concert pianist. He was Vienna correspondent and critic for the magazine the *Musical Courier,* in 1932-34. In 1935-38 he served with the Mexican Department of Fine Arts in the field of concerts and lectures. He has lectured at the University of Chicago. . . . C. Day Lewis is an outstanding English poet and critic. . . . George Scott, radio editor of the magazine *Fight,* was the author of the article "Radio Covers the News" in our October 11 issue. . . . David McKelvy White, who fought in the International Brigade in Spain, is chairman of the Friends of the Lincoln Brigade and executive secretary of the American branch of the Veterans of the International Brigade. . . . Harry Raymond is New York City Hall reporter for the *Daily Worker.* . . . Norman Rosten's new verse-play, *Samson Agonistes,* will be broadcast on a coast-to-coast hookup by the National Broadcasting System, November 5, at 8:30 p.m. The play is a modern reinterpretation of the biblical symbols of Samson and the Philistines. This is the second time that the author's work has been broadcast by NBC.

The Castelao drawings reproduced on page 21 are included in a folio, "Milicianos por Castelao," published by the *Frente Antifascista Gallego,* and are on sale at the Delphic Studios, which housed the artist's recent show in New York City.

The drawing by Abraham Tobias on page 31 is included in the artist's exhibition of drawings and paintings at Howard University this month.

Flashbacks

WE HAVE it on reliable authority that the Dies committee intends to investigate "Flashbacks" this week. It will be testified that we have been guilty of spreading Red propaganda in reminding the world that on Nov. 9, 1919, seven hundred New York police, aided by state and federal agents, raided seventy-nine radical headquarters in New York. State Senator Lusk, head of the Dies—pardon us—Lusk committee investigating *seditious activities, issued a statement* declaring that it was shown by evidence before the committee that the leaders of the Communist Party were aiming at the overthrow of the United States government by revolution. . . . The Dies committee will also charge "Flashbacks" with Red propaganda for unearthing the fact that John Quincy Adams wrote of the lynching of Abolitionist Elijah Lovejoy on Nov. 7, 1837: "That an American citizen in a state whose constitution repudiates all slavery should die a martyr in defense of the freedom of the press is a phenomenon in the history of this Union. Martyrdom is the ordeal through which all great improvements in the condition of men are doomed to pass. Here is the most effective portraiture of the first American martyr to the freedom of the press, and the freedom of the slave." . . . Likewise this column is suspect for reminding the friends of the American Labor Party that Ebenezer Ford, New York carpenter, was elected to the State Assembly on the ticket of the Workingmen's Party, *Nov. 6, 1829.* . . . This, coupled with the fact that we recall the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt on Nov. 8, 1932, just about seals our doom.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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Communist Candidate

Why a Big Vote for Amter in New York State Is Vital

RUTH McKENNEY

THIS is the story of a man and a symbol. They both have the same name—Israel Amter—and it is not easy to say where the man begins and the symbol leaves off, for Israel Amter is probably the only politician running in next week's crucial New York State elections who has slept, eaten, and dreamt with his party platform for thirty-seven years. Not that Mr. Amter is a dreamy idealist, operating exclusively in the clouds and addressing his campaign speeches to yet unborn generations. Mr. Amter, like many another good Communist, is a precise realist—only a realist with principles.

Indeed, Israel Amter is running on the Communist ticket for congressman-at-large "precisely because," as they say down at the *Daily Worker,* he understands the hard facts of building a democratic front to stop fascism in America. For it isn't enough to hate Hitler and drop around to the newsreels to boo Mussolini. It isn't even enough to kick in for collections for Spain and keep your fingers crossed about Father Coughlin. Fascism is no slouch; fascism works fast. Those namby-pamby liberals who thought the Reds were getting semi-hysterical about the possibilities of fascism here in America were silenced forever on that terrible day, a month or so ago, when we all sat by our radios and heard the destruction of a free people.

Now nobody can pick up his newspaper without a sick feeling in the pit of the stomach. Nobody now, not even the flossy hair-splitters of our polite liberal magazines, can doubt that fascism threatens us all, immediately, right now, here. And that's where Israel Amter, the symbol, comes in. For the Communist Party's answer to the march of fascism at home and abroad is the cry—unity at all costs among all anti-fascists, at once! It's a simple idea, of course, and it's based on bitter experience. Divide and rule is an old slogan but Hitler has used it to his advantage for a long time now. Communists have learned the obvious—working people, the middle class, must learn to stand together to prevent reactionaries ruling.

Now it's one thing to raise what the Communists call a "slogan"—in this case, unity—and quite another to put it into operation. Communists have worked diligently to build the American Labor Party in New York State, for here was the most complete expression of working class, white-collar worker, and professional unity in the country. After the primaries the Communists called their State Committee into session and, after plenty of careful deliberation and consideration of the candidates on the American Labor Party ticket and their records, decided to withdraw the Communist ticket from the state elections—all but one candidate.

All kinds of people immediately began to beef about this Communist decision. The Socialists, for instance, those old dreamers, raised quite a hullabaloo. It appeared (to them) that the Communists weren't revolutionary any more. Of course they haven't been able to dope out an answer yet to the quiet question of the Reds: "If an American Labor Party candidate is running against an unreconstructed Tammany Democrat or a black Republican, won't the working-class votes cast for a Socialist candidate split the anti-fascist front and throw the election to the tory?" This has proved quite a poser to Norman Thomas, but in his happy-go-lucky fashion he has just ignored this side of practical politics and gone his own sweet way, backing opponents to Marcantonio and other ALP candidates.

The reactionaries, Mr. Dies, and Tammany Hall and Bruce Barton and assorted other such gentry, including Father Coughlin and such pretty fascists as Gerald K. Smith, didn't much like the Communist decision to back the ALP candidates, either. This was quite natural, for the tories understand only too well that working- and middle-class unity spells defeat for their interesting plans to ruin the New Deal, put the quietus on labor unions, and pave the way for a sterner and fiercer form of reaction. So they raised a stink. "Red! Red!" they screamed at the ALP.

And now we come to a pretty sad business. The leaders of the American Labor Party *should* know that the Red-scare is the

In order to register your vote for Israel Amter, Communist candidate for Congressman-at-large, and because of the operating order of the voting machine, we advise you to follow this voting guide:
PULL AMTER LEVER
FOR CONGRESSMAN AT-LARGE
first
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
CONGRESSMAN-at-LARGE VOTE FOR 2
DEMOCRATIC A
REPUBLICAN B
AMERICAN LABOR C
OTHER PARTY D
OTHER PARTY E
OTHER PARTY F
COMMUNIST G
ISRAEL AMTER
Then Vote for Other Candidates That Stand for Labor and Progress

To guard against any possible error in voting. The N. Y. State Communist Party has circulated thousands of these instruction sheets.

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prelude to fascism. They do know it, really. But in the jittery weeks before the election they made a mistake and the papers were full of the headlines, ALP REPUDIATES COMMUNIST SUPPORT. The New York *Sun* called the Communist Party "he who gets slapped" and there was great rejoicing among the tories for they thought that the Communists would be jarred out of their support for the ALP candidates.

But the Reds surprised the New York *Sun*. Communists don't like to get repudiated any more than the next man or the next political party. But Marxists cannot let their tempers interfere with building the front against reaction. There was some teeth-grinding down on Twelfth Street, naturally, but the Communists hitched up their suspenders and went right back to working for the defeat of Bruce Barton and John O'Connor and such other pretties running in the New York State elections.

A problem remained, however. Mr. Dies was blustering out in Michigan. Father Coughlin was screaming that Communists weren't legal. Red-baiting picked up after the Munich agreement, so refreshing to fascists at home as well as abroad. The Communist Party of New York State decided that, besides supporting the ALP ticket, it would demonstrate its full voting strength at the polls this fall.

So Israel Amter, the man and the symbol, began his campaign for congressman-at-large. Mr. Amter is no shadow-boxer. Unlike Norman Thomas, he isn't running to hear himself make speeches, nor is he putting up the most energetic and exciting fight in New York State Communist Party history just to keep the hammer-and-sickle franchise for the voting machine. Mr. Amter is running in dead earnest. The Communists consider that it is absolutely essential to the building of the democratic front in America that Israel Amter poll a huge vote in the New York State elections. The Reds want to demonstrate to reactionary enemy and friendly progressive alike that the Communist Party has strength and able leadership to offer to the anti-fascist front in America. Mr. Amter's vote, the Communists say, will be the best answer to the American reactionary and fascist; the best answer to the chop-licking fascists abroad. Every vote cast for Israel Amter will be an answer to Munich—a proud declaration: We have just begun to fight.

And Communists are no amateur politicians. Israel Amter hasn't been sitting home telling his small granddaughter, aged one, why she should vote for grandpa. Mr. Amter toured upstate New York, talking to thousands of farmers, appearing on local radio stations, giving interviews for front-page stories. Communists upstate distributed 100,000 copies of a little pamphlet discussing the problems of farmers and telling why they should vote for Israel Amter and then the ALP candidates.

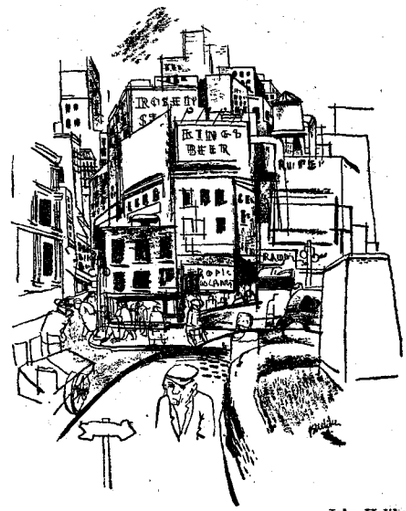
Coming back to New York City, Mr. Amter has made the most notable campaign in the history of the city. The five speeches a day he has made to New York City voters were just the beginning. He addressed the biggest election rally held by any party in Queens. He has talked himself practically hoarse in a dozen radio appearances. His campaign workers have distributed six million pieces of literature, addressed in direct, simple terms to white-collar workers, union men, Italian and Jewish workers, housewives. Two airplanes will fly over New York City the day before election, with Mr. Amter's name floating behind them. The Communist Party has radio time on election day and Mr. Amter will get in a last word as people go to the polls.

I've just sketched in the more important items in Mr. Amter's campaign. The Communist candidate, as you can see, has put up one of the liveliest, most exciting fights for votes in New York State election history. And yet, curiously, the best argument for candidate Israel Amter is the life story of Israel Amter the man.

It's a little hard to tell the story of Israel Amter the man, not the symbol, because the bare facts sound so solemn. And Mr. Amter really isn't solemn at all. He's given his life to the working-class movement, he's been in prison, he's been poor, and yet he's had a rich and rewarding life and wouldn't swap it for any man's fame or comfort.

Mr. Amter doesn't look much like a politician. He has a gaunt face, but his eyes are very lively, and he has a neat wit. He makes his secretary laugh, which is no mean feat, and the people who work with him day after day worship him and spend their spare time trying to pamper him and keep him from working too hard—a quite impossible attempt, incidentally. When he isn't running for office, he has a staggeringly difficult executive job. He's head of the New York State Communist Party, and although of course the State Committee makes collective decisions, Mr. Amter has to see that they're carried through.

That means that he's at his bare desk in his very plain office at 9 o'clock every morning. His wife brings him in his lunch, neatly tied up in brown paper, at about 1 o'clock, and sometimes he takes ten minutes off from his work to eat. Most of the time he munches his sandwiches while he listens to sailors or farmers or party organizers tell him their troubles and demand an answer—immediate, of course. Everything is immediate and crucial in the Communist Party. He leaves his office at about 7 o'clock, and starts home with a staggering bale of books and pamphlets under his arm. For Mr. Amter, like all Communists, believes that the only way to organize the working class for Socialism is to study, and study, and then again study. At fifty-seven, Mr. Amter is a diligent scholar. He is famed around the halls of the New York State office of the Communist Party for his remarkable memory and keen Marxist knowledge. The byword among his staff is: "Ask Amter; he knows." Mr. Amter has been known to tell one person the exact size of the electorate of South Bend, Ind., follow that up a minute later by pointing out that there are five steel factories in Canton, O., not four, and round off the five-minute period by discussing the gold-point for the Japanese yen, pre-war and post-war. Mr. Amter is famous as an organizer too. Puffing on his underslung pipe, his eyes snapping, he appears at meetings to listen to the debate and then rise to put his finger on the exact soft point. "Consider this suggestion," he will say persuasively.



John Heliker

This is Israel Amter, circa 1938. A Marxist, a scholar, a great campaign speaker, executive, organizer, devoted Communist. Where did he come from? How did he learn to settle union problems? Who told him how to organize unemployed workers?

Mr. Amter's life-story is downright fabulous. He started in the revolutionary movement not as a coal miner or a sailor or a politician. He joined the Socialist Party in 1901 when he was a young and enormously talented musician, and he spent the first fourteen years of his life in the working-class movement studying music in Germany and writing symphonies. He was a poet, too, as well as a composer, and he was thirty before he turned to mass work and forsook his music.

Israel Amter's father was an alfalfa farmer in Colorado. The crash of '96 sent the Amters back to Denver, landless farmers, and Israel grew up in pretty bleak poverty in the Western city. He played a mean brand of sandlot baseball in those days and his heroes were alternately one of the mustached baseball players of the nineties, and Beethoven or Bach. For Amter showed great musical talent even as a small boy and his whole family urged him on to realize his ambition to become a great composer.

But life was exciting in Denver of the late nineties. The Western Federation of Miners led a great strike just outside the city. Young Amter was fired by their courage and determination. He met a pretty young girl on the miners' picket lines—a girl from Denver who wanted to be a great artist, just as he

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planned to be a great composer. Her name was Sadie Van Veen. Sadie Van Veen and Israel Amter were married shortly after the great strike, and on their way to Leipzig, Germany, where he was to study music and she was to study art. But before they left, Amter's Dutch father-in-law convinced him that Socialism was the only solution to the problems of modern society. Israel Amter carried a Socialist Party card in his pocket the day he sailed for Germany.

It is hard to write symphonies when under your window march demonstrators for peace, workers on strike, women demanding bread. Israel Amter had a great future in the world of music before him when the war broke out and he came back home to carry on the fight for peace.

At first he worked in the revolutionary movement in his "spare" time. But then his talents as a speaker and organizer brought him greater and greater responsibilities. One day, during the war, he closed his piano for good, carried the boxes and boxes of pen-and-ink manuscripts to his trunk, and turned to the revolutionary movement. Since then he has worked sixteen hours a day, day in and day out, with now and then a brief vacation, a short illness, to punctuate the years. He was one of the founders of the Communist Party and one of its earliest organizers. He lived in Cleveland for five years, helped organize some of the earliest unions in Ohio mass industries. When the depression struck America, Amter plunged into unemployment work. His talent as an organizer made him a leader of those great demonstrations for relief in the early years of the depression, and men who live under the fairly decent relief standards of today owe a debt to Israel Amter and those other leaders of the early mass movement for jobs and food.

Among the many hunger marches Israel Amter led was the tragic one in New York, 1930, when the police descended on the demonstrators, clubbed and beat the marchers, and arrested the leaders. Amter went to jail with William Z. Foster, Robert Minor, and Harry Raymond.

The revolutionary career of Mr. Amter is studded with the stories of many hard jobs well done, many campaigns hard-fought. The jail sentence only interrupted his work among the unemployed. For another two years he was the national organizer of the Unemployed Councils—finally he was elected state organizer in the largest state organization of the Communist Party, and today holds the post of New York State chairman.

Israel Amter, a composer who gave up his life work to fight the battles of the working class, a leader who has marched many times into police terror, campaigns today for the votes of New York's workers and middle-class people in the coming election.

"I'm not ashamed to ask for your votes," he said the other night at an election rally. "I'm proud to ask for them. For every vote cast for Israel Amter is a vote against fascism and reaction."

The Jews in Austria

"When Knives Are Smeared . . ."

ANATOL RAPOPORT

I CAME into Austria practically by accident. Originally I intended to turn to the right on the Swiss side of the Rhine and head for Chur and the southeastern Alps, but the sight from above just beyond the Wildhaus Pass took my breath away. Where I stood it was drizzling and chilly. Two thousand feet below spread a sunlit plain surrounded by mountains which seemed to have been simply placed there like stage scenery. Their summits were immersed in the clouds from which I was emerging. I jammed the brakes and jumped off the bike. I could see the silver Rhine ribbon below and a bridge with a wooden roof. I thought the Third Reich was just across, but it was impossible to picture the silver ribbon as a yawning chasm between democracy and fascism. The unity of the scene was perfect in its splendor; the incongruity of this beauty with all that was going on beyond the river was too glaring. Soon curiosity and a desire "to see for myself" defeated other considerations, and I coasted down to the river.

The bridge was deserted. I cycled over the rickety boards, uncertain of what was going to happen next. Two banners on the other side made me realize that I was not yet in Austria but in Liechtenstein, one of those operetta principalities, which somehow keep their independence while empires crumble. I asked one of the peasants in the cabbage fields where the Austrian border was. His sullen pointing to the east was my first contact with the drama of the situation. Swastikas painted on the road at regular intervals marked the way, reminding me of the inscription, "Abandon hope all ye who enter here." Here and there were traces of feeble attempts to erase them. A half-hour later a canary-green border patrol was heilhitlering me and asking how much money I had. I told him, and proved it. Then I kept going east.

My first companion, a middle-aged worker, pointed out two camps pitched almost side by side in the valley.

"That's how they breed them," he remarked. "One of those camps is the Girl Scouts', and the other may be Hitler Youth or just a road-workers' camp or the barracks. What do they do with the babies? Well, I don't know, we didn't have any of those Reich-babies yet. . . . It's just five months, you know. But I heard in the Reich the girl never sees the kid. They take it away and raise it somewhere."

He tells me he had been working on the roads in Saxony and is now cycling home, because he has not the fare, and the Reich Germans just laughed at him when he begged for a lift in a truck.

"We'll knock that Austrian *Gemuetlichkeit* out of you," they said. They fed him uncooked meat so stale that "it danced around the plate" and disgusting fish and black coffee without sugar. In the meantime his wife was getting a mark a day (buying power approximately 25 cents), with five mouths to feed.

The frankness of some of the opinions voiced by workers and poor peasants on the way astonished me. Discontent, semi-cynical Austrian jibes, disgust, and especially fear, a universal fear of war, often expressed in the then significant question "What do they say in Paris?" were so open that I wondered whether the Nazi dog whips had been in action too short a time or too long a time to make any difference.

I come into an inn for the night. The old jingles on the door invoking peace and blessings on the stranger have given way to other greetings such as:

> Comest as a German thou to me?
> Thy greeting shall "Heil Hitler" be.

As I open the door, the steamy odor of cabbage and roast pork (Austria was still eating well in July 1938—I got a taste of the real potato diet only when I got to Germany proper) excites in me the anticipation of food and rest. But at the same time I hear a barking heilhitler from one of the younger SA men playing cards at a round table, and the extreme weariness almost gives way to a desire to leave. I had thought I could bring myself to heilhitler, but I could not. Still, in spite of the absence of a swastika on my bike or on any part of me, my "race" (whatever that may mean) remains undetected because of the very picture those innocent peasants get of the Jew from the press.

The innkeeper still rises to receive me in accordance with ancient traditions of hospitality, but there is nothing in his attitude to suggest that he considers me a guest. To him I am most likely a bike-wandering worker, and the absence of the swastika creates a very questionable impression.

"A mark and a half, pay up now," is all he says.

During the evenings I spent in the sitting-rooms of these village inns, reading the papers, I had the opportunity to observe these worthies, innkeepers, shopkeepers, kulaks whose accumulating land-holdings are protected against any division by Nazi inheritance laws, reducing the poorer peasantry to landless

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laborers. Their half-drunken conversations had a triumphant tone to them, as if they felt themselves emerging victors in some mortal combat. Not that they actually did any combating or in fact anything except shout "Heil Sieg" at the invading German armies; yet this "victory" found ample expression in excessive rudeness, blatancy, rowdiness, just-let-me-lay-my-hands-on-a-Jew spirit (unfortunately, Jews are not to be had in Tyrol), and more concretely in the prominently displayed signs on businesses, "The Leader [boss] and the Followers [workers] of this industry stand united in the German labor front."

I come into a youth hostlery and ask for a bed. To be without a swastika in such a place is a risky matter. I put on the thickest American accent and do violence to German grammar. The chief tells me, No, sorry, he can't let me stay, I have no membership card, but if I am an American, he'll show me around. He asks me whether I come from North or South America and is somewhat disappointed when I tell him, because he has a cousin in Montevideo. We go through a spacious mess-hall, immaculate shower-baths, spotless dormitories, and a sitting-room with a large fireplace. Here the children are singing old German songs. I linger a while to listen to them. Schubert's "Linden Tree." The "Lorelei." Only the kids don't know the name of the Jew Heine: to them the "Lorelei" was written by Anonymous. . . . And then I hear the "Horst Wessel" song.

When knives are smeared with Jewish blood,
Then happy days have come.

Fifteen-year-old Tyrolean maidens, golden-braided, brown-cheeked, blue-eyed, singing a ditty of a pimp, poetry of the kind one finds scribbled in public comfort stations.

Monstrous as this absurdity appears, its tragic explanation becomes fairly clear in due time. The Nazis knew how to utilize not only the base impulses of the demoralized, frustrated middle class but also the fundamentally noble, collectivist aspirations of youth, whose plight was as critical but whose attitude was much more defiant, even optimistic. Therein, I think, lies the explanation of the absurd union of Nazism with the youth movement.

They take unemployed, hopeless young people from the sultry atmosphere of their kitchens, away from the nagging, gloomy parents, organize them into battalions, send them hiking into snow-covered mountains. In surrounding them with a romantic atmosphere, they inflate their adolescent egos by telling them fairytales of "racial superiority." They cater to the youthful contempt for hypocritical clericalism by ridiculing the international ideals of Catholicism. They exploit the collectivist aspirations of youth by putting forward slogans like "Common good before individual good," but they explain "common" by vague allusions to "race" and "blood." They play on the newly awakened sex hunger by exploding the prejudice against illegitimacy, at the same time carefully shielding the young from any contraceptive knowledge.

Skywriter

(remembering Ben Leider)

Skywriter
Worker in the broad air
Over the continents
We watch you build our legend.

Comrade how beautifully
Sunlight stands on your wing:
How tall the message
Stands poised against wind.

Learning from aerial boldness
We shall control the land;
Horizon and their watchers
See the flaming powerdive,
Prepare with your signal.

O comrade

alert over the cities

myth of this sacred year

we watch the sky

NORMAN ROSTEN.

★ ★ ★

Having destroyed all ambition to reason or question by simply avoiding any reasoning or questioning in thei "teaching," the Nazis tell *anything* to these young people, dull-witted for complete lack of mental exercise, and are blindly believed. Thus they throw the Jew to this young mob. Being generally without actual contact with real Jews, the youth conceives them as a symbol of any vile attribute the authorities choose to endow them with. To the athlete the Jew is pictured as a physical degenerate; to the peasant youth who loves the soil, as a homeless wanderer; to the idealist, collective-minded youth as a ruthless acquisitor; to the young girls as a rapist and "blood polluter"; to the children as a monstrous ritual murderer. This concentration of all "evil" into one symbol is especially welcome to the young mind. One must only crush the "international Jewish mug" to realize the National Socialist German paradise. And this pleasantly easy solution of all problems caters to the naturally optimistic inclinations of youth.

The guiding principle of Nazi propaganda is obviously to aim as low as possible. I pick up a paper devoted exclusively to Jew-baiting. A whole page is given to "pictures from Jewish life." A snapshot of a sloppily dressed woman is explained: "This is the way they waddle through the streets. Her stockings are torn, she is filthy all over and stinks to make one sick." A picture of a frowning Jew: "This look of hatred reveals more than the Jew wants to say." A smiling Jew: "He rejoices over another of his swindles." A little girl: "This child will some day turn into a genuine Talmud Jewess." Here is a little article entitled "Israelites":

The Jews have been able for ages to hold their places among the non-Jews. For a long time they pretended to be not Jews but Israelites. But it is known that the Israelites, like the Galileans, the Ammonites, etc., with whom the Jews lived in Palestine, were really a non-Jewish tribe. Just as the Jews today call themselves Englishmen in England, Frenchmen in France, Germans in Germany, etc., so for centuries they called themselves Israelites to get along with the world better. Even today the newspapers of the so-called democratic countries call the Jews not Jews but Israelites, who, it is claimed, are persecuted. The French Jew-paper *Oeuvre* did this in writing that four thousand "Israelites" were arrested in Vienna. The so-called Christian churches follow this example in speaking in their schools of "Israelites" instead of Jews. The fact, however, remains: once a Jew, always a Jew, no matter how handsome a mask he puts on!

The reaction of an uninitiated person to these revelations is naturally purest astonishment. Considered purely for its propaganda value, the "article" seems so completely pointless that one questions the efficacy of Nazi indoctrination methods, and wonders how they were able to sway the bulk of the population to support enthusiastically at one time or other such moronic ideas. The mystery becomes more or less clear as one reads nonsense such as this long enough. In its *consistent* abstinence from logic, coherence, or any semblance to truth, it is effective. Only one who is accustomed to find and expects to find at least some pretense to logic in any discussion of important questions can doubt the validity of statements completely unsupported by any coherent reasoning. But Nazi propaganda never engaged in relevant reasoning. It is largely directed at young people who from the time they began to read newspapers have read nothing else but such propaganda. Repetition of a statement with the effective exclusion of any challenging statements can become as convincing as the most beautifully constructed dialectic edifice. We have an opportunity to observe this in our own American advertising methods. The strength of the senseless discussion of the "Israelites" becomes clear when one realizes that the very word "Jew" is already deeply associated with everything vile in the sluggish minds (lack of mental exercise!) of the "idealistic" Nazi youth.

One does not have to hunt far for such brilliant pieces of journalism as the exposé of the Israelites. The celebrated weekly, *Der Stürmer,* is full of them. Here is a photograph from the New York *Daily News* showing the handing over of a check to help Jewish refugees. All the noses are conspicuously penciled to appear more Jewish, and the mouths are distorted into vicious grins. Below is another picture showing a demonstration of the unemployed. Heading: "Jews roll in luxury while non-Jews beg for bread." The lower picture was taken from the *Jewish Daily Forward* and acknowledged as such, probably to show that the Jews gloat over the plight of the non-Jews. There is a further

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explanation: "It is written in the Jewish law book, the Talmud, that only the Jews are human, that non-Jews are beasts in human form. Hence the treatment of non-Jews in America."

In an article explaining the Hindenburg catastrophe we read "a Communist leaflet circulated in Canada":

> We shall burn the churches of the degenerate priests. . . . We shall protect the supremacy of international Jewry, because it is the backbone of our movement. . . . We are the lords of the press. . . . Thanks to Trotsky [!!!] we even have weapons. . . . Our brothers have burned the Hindenburg.

In an article repudiating the Catholic idea of international brotherhood, Julius Streicher himself rhapsodizes:

> Look where you will about you, no equality is found in nature. Among stones, plants, and animals, everywhere one encounters differences in form, color, and contents. If this were not so, how sad, how boring would the Universe be . . .
>
> Man is also part of the Universe . . . and as stones, plants, and animals differ among themselves, so there is no equality to be found in Man. . . . There are three fundamental human races, the White, the Yellow, and the Black. . . . The Jews are a result of century-old mixing of the three races. . . . The Jews deny the existence of races in order to steal for themselves the advantages of tolerance. . . . Anyone who maintains that the white man is equal to the yellow man, the yellow man to the black man, or the black man to the white man, denies God-given reality . . .

I did not see a single Jew on the entire four-hundred-mile journey from the Swiss border to Vienna. Even in the republican days the 300,000-odd Austrian Jews were nearly all concentrated in Vienna. During the growth of anti-Semitism in the provinces an even further concentration took place. They managed to keep going during the Schuschnigg regime. The Jewish bourgeoisie remained secure. The merchants and manufacturers had no scruples about joining the clerical-fascist Fatherland Front or accepting Catholicism if necessary. Baptized Jews enjoyed all rights, including that of holding office. Some (like Hecht) did hold influential posts in the Schuschnigg government and provided ample fuel for Hitler's roasting of the "Jewish" regime. Jews still held a well established, in some cases a dominant, position in the professions. The small shopkeepers and white-collar workers saw little change in their twenty-year-old plight and continued their dreary, half-impoverished existence. Proletarian Jews were almost non-existent in Vienna.

Ned Hilton

"You start yelling for 'self-determination' and I'll get in touch with Chamberlain immediately."

On the 12th of March Hitler marched in, and the people threw themselves on their knees before the Redeemer. Of course, one must remember that if one-fifth of a two million population go roaring through the streets, while the other four-fifths sit sullenly behind drawn shades, the impression still is that the whole city is celebrating. However, it is widely admitted that in those March days the sentiment in Austria was strongly pro-Hitler. For four years all enlightenment had been smothered and the hypocritical, futile propaganda of the "Black" government was pushed down Austrian throats. The ridiculous efforts to drum up some patriotism in this pauperized nation, the whining of the priests, and the restoration of nobility acted on the nerves of the impoverished masses. At the same time Nazi propaganda trickled through from Germany. It was directed, as always, not for something but against everything, against Schuschnigg and the gang, against the Jews, against Catholics, against unemployment, against the Cinderella position of Austria, against the League of Nations. What was left for the leaderless masses to follow? The "Social Democrats" remembered only that in February 1934 they were slaughtered by Dollfuss. Hitler did not hesitate to remind them of this (omitting to say what he did to his own Social Democrats) and to add that they had been betrayed by their leaders, and that the Nazis had also been "martyrs" in July 1934. Hitler foamed at the mouth against "capital" and "privilege," while Schuschnigg's clericals regarded riches as a divine reward. News came that unemployment had been liquidated in Germany but not that the buying power of the laborer's wages about equaled that of their own unemployment relief. In addition to all this they heard legends about a wonderful leader who snarled at the Entente instead of licking their boots as Schuschnigg did. So on the 12th of March they "threw their sweaty nightcaps in the air."

The pogroms of March and April began a few days after Hitler's triumphal entry. I arrived in August when, according to my friends, things had quieted down, and the strangulation of the Jews took an organized course. The Jewish shopkeepers were ordered under threat of fine to remove the epithets of "Jew-pig," etc., painted on their windows and instead display a neat card marked "Jewish

Business." The red-paint epithets remained only on the shops that had closed down since there was no one to remove them. In front of most Jewish stores a young boy was to be seen playing with a candid camera ready to "shoot" any Aryan customer. Occasionally an evicted Jewish family would appear, grouped around a handwagon with their scanty belongings. The children showed all the signs of hunger. The inscription "For Aryans Only" on all the street benches ensured that the Jews would stay on their feet while going from neighbor to neighbor begging to be taken in. Parks displayed notices, "Jews enter at their own risk." All this to feed the eye. The ear also got its impressions, beginning with newly imported brass bands in taverns instead of the favorite Viennese waltz fiddlers, ending with stories of murder, suicide, and blackmail. There were no rapes. Jews are untouchables. I shall not bother to tell things that happened to my old friends, some in Dachau, some dead, some tortured, some escaped. Equally terrible things can be told by hundreds of others. But I must dwell a little on the celebrated Anti-Semitic Exhibit in Vienna, the "educational" side of the Jew-baiting campaign.

They decorated the walls of an abandoned railway station with drapes, the floors with carpets, and displayed a most astonishing array of sheer stupidity which would seem to the uninitiated to be devoid of any propaganda value. But, as I tried to point out above, there is method in this madness. One must never forget that the majority visiting the exhibit come duly prepared by the articles in *Der Stürmer,* etc., so that the most innocent things about Jews have for them the most sinister connotations.

The symbolic figure of "The Eternal Jew," the main motif of the exposition, towers on a huge poster at the entrance. He is the traditional, bearded gentleman wearing a kaftan and an expression of hypocritical humility. In one palm he holds some gold coins. In his other hand is his dog whip (the same kind

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that is used by Nazi Storm Troopers), and under his arm is a block shaped like the USSR, marked with the hammer and sickle.

As one enters, one is at once impressed with the "scientific" spirit of the exhibit. It is full of historical developments, pictorial statistics, charts, curves, and displays. To begin with we learn the origin of the Jew. Six heads representing the six "basic" races (I forget which but the Negro, the Mongol, and the Nordic are included) all contributed to the Jewish mongrel. Yet the characteristics of the Jewish physiognomy are such as to be immediately recognized (a detailed description of these "characteristics"). This, however, does not prevent the Jews from masquerading under different nationalities. Evidence on hand: A giant portrait of Charlie Chaplin bears the inscription, "Englishman? No, Jew!" A Union Jack is displayed below. Stavisky stands above the French colors. "Frenchman? No, Jew!" etc., through all the nationalities with the corresponding flags until we come to Litvinov. "Russian? No, Jew! Pig-Jew!" But the flag is conspicuously absent.

The next room is a chamber of horrors. Some antique stone knives bear witness to the traditional cruelty of the Jews, who accomplish the barbarous rite of circumcision with these implements. A detailed, appetizing account of the rite is there for the degenerates and sexual perverts to lap up. A little moving-picture appeals to the tender compassions by showing a Jewish butcher killing a cow. The subtitles include comments such as, "The cruel smile on the face of the Jew shows that he enjoys murder," and "The Jew blows up the lung to see if the beast was healthy. He sells the flesh of the sick beasts to non-Jews," and finally, "Have the Jews slaughtered humans in this way?"

Further we see "How the nations of the so-called Middle Ages were able to protect themselves against Jews." This exhibit includes displays of compulsory wearing apparel, pictures of ghettos, the originals of various ancient edicts against Jews, a veritable little museum. There is also a very vivid print showing a Jew in the process of being burned at the stake head down, evidently a lamented lost art.

The next section is devoted to documentary evidence, alleged quotations from the Talmud:

A Jew may abuse a non-Jewess.

A man [Jew] may do everything with a woman that he wishes. He may treat her like a piece of meat: eat it raw, fried, cooked, or smoked.

The non-Jew is like human excrement—just as unclean.

All non-Jewesses are whores.

Every Jew is assumed to know the Talmud by heart. (Incidentally the chapters referred to in these "quotations" do not exist.)

On Jewish festivals:

The Jews still celebrate *Purim* in memory of the massacre of eighty thousand non-Jews which they brought about in Persia through the sly intrigues of the Jewess Esther, who had succeeded in worming her way into the king's favor.

The Jews, who were reduced to the position of slaves by the West Goths, betrayed the Christian Gothic kingdom in Spain by opening the gates to the Moors.

This ancient and medieval evidence soon gives way to streamlined charts and beautifully prepared pictorial statistics with manikins symbolizing the unassimilated Jew, the half-assimilated Jew, the assimilated, the Jewish woman, Jewish child, and the Aryans. The entire history of Europe is shown as a process of infiltration of the Jewish manikins among the Aryan manikins. In one instance they are shown polluting with their yellow color the red Aryan blood. In another they invade schools, professions, politics. In still another they "infest" cities.

Finally we enter a hall dedicated to the infiltration of the Jews into the sciences and arts. Again I must stress the fact that the propaganda value of the exposition becomes appreciable only when the very idea of "Jew" and "Judaism" acquires definite connotations. Otherwise one might very well walk through the display, "The Jew in Music," or "The Jew in Medicine," and get an entirely unin-

J. Bartlett

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tended impression that the achievements of the Jews in the various fields of endeavor have been considerable. It is just because the proper attitude toward the Jews has been presumably created that such exhibits can be counted upon to produce the desired effect.

Take the department entitled "Artists?" It consists of very handsome portraits of Elizabeth Bergner, Horovitz, Heifetz, Menuhin, Bruno Walter, Klemperer, Fritz Korntner, Reinhardt, Richard Tauber, Milstein, Piatigorsky, Korngold, Schnabel, Huberman—in short, people of the greatest importance in music and theater for the last decade or two. Except for some caricatures showing Bruno Walter trampling on a broken bust of Mozart and Reinhardt demolishing a book entitled *Goethe,* there is nothing to suggest that the collection was intended to be a rogues' gallery. Theatrical and musical programs are on display, programs which I remember made theatrical and musical history in Vienna, such as Walter's unforgettable performance of Mahler's Eighth Symphony in 1933, Horovitz's first piano recital in Vienna, Menuhin with the Symphony, Elizabeth Bergner in her best stage and film roles, Reinhardt's production of *Everyman* in Salzburg.

The same Viennese who only a year ago gave twenty-minute ovations to these artists now walked blank-faced, silent through the halls. Groups of children guided by their teachers showed no lively excitement one usually sees in youngsters who are taken through museums or expositions. Silent bewilderment was stamped on their faces. It was difficult to say to what extent the poison had penetrated.

I saw no intellectuals at the exposition. Indeed, during my entire journey across Austria and Germany I did not come in contact with a single Nazi "intellectual," although I have heard that such exist. The short-lived protest of Furtwängler against the expulsion of Jewish musicians has been publicized and given due credit. But where are the protests of, say, Max Planck, Germany's number-one man in physics, against the pillorying of Albert Einstein as a quack? How must an honest physician feel when he sees Koch, Ehrlich, Friedlander, Wassermann, and Freud and dozens of the most outstanding names in medicine "exposed" as conspirators to poison the health of Germans and pave the way for Judah's world rule? How must any literate person feel when he sees a map of the world indicating the establishment of complete "Jewish-Marxist" rule in the USSR, China, Afghanistan (sic!), Palestine, Czechoslovakia, loyalist Spain, Mexico, and (don't faint) Texas? These Texas Soviets, presumably unnoticed by the mob, were a subject of astonished amusement among a group of Americans who happened to visit the exposition. Several theories on the subject were advanced, and the one that finally swayed the opinion was that the brilliant Nazi sociologist-statistician mistook the emblem of the Lone Star State for the symbol of Soviet power.

Post-Munich England

Britons Never Will Be Slaves?

C. DAY LEWIS

London.

Now that the tumult and the shouting have died, and the captains and the kings have departed from their Munich tête-à-tête, we can count our losses. There can be little doubt that the Munich "agreement" is the biggest blow which the left has sustained in this country, not excluding the general strike. It has shown the great wave of popular feeling in favor of the Czechs and of standing up to Hitler as impotent against the pro-Nazi policy—not even of the government as a whole—but of a dominant section of the Cabinet. When we compare the effect which popular opinion had upon the Hoare-Laval pact with its failure even to deflect Chamberlain's policy during this last month, we can see how much nearer this country has come towards fascism—and by "coming nearer to fascism" I don't mean merely falling on Hitler's neck. More and more does it become clear that Chamberlain and his friends have taken the bit between their teeth; that our efforts must be devoted, not to restraining them, but to getting rid of them for good and all. Unfortunately, the Labor Party, though its attitude has stiffened considerably since the effects of the Munich agreement began to appear, came near to forfeiting the confidence of progressive people by the display they put up in the House of Commons when Chamberlain announced the calling of the Munich conference. On this occasion, amid the hysterical pandemonium which reigned, it was left for the Liberal leader to express a hope that whatever agreement might be reached should not altogether lose sight of the interests of the Czechs, and for the Communist member, Willie Gallacher, to indict the whole policy that had allowed the crisis to take place.

I do not wish to be accused of defeatism. I believe, on the other hand, that fascism, because it has taken this giant stride towards us, must now be visible to the naked eye of even the most short-sighted, and that resistance to it at home will be correspondingly enlarged and stiffened. Our frontier is no longer on the Rhine. Fascism has already begun its invasion of this country: it has its Fifth Column already established here, and for several years it has been carrying on an insidious campaign against the heart of England, our civil liberties. This campaign has been evident both to left-wing political workers on the one hand and to many of the professional classes on the other; it has, as yet, affected comparatively indirectly the lives of the petty bourgeoisie and the unpolitical workers; when it does strike home to them, the anti-fascist front will be complete. I wish now to discuss in some detail this question of civil liberties.

Three highly significant cases have cropped up this year. During the last month one newsreel was censored and the *March of Time* newsreel has been held up altogether, because they presented an attitude towards the crisis which was unpleasing to the government. The commission which was investigating the Sandys case (a matter of breach of privilege) found that two members of the Cabinet had acted in—to put it mildly—a most unparliamentary manner. This scandal, which in more normal times might have led to the resignations of the ministers involved, was faded out in the false dawn of the Munich agreement and the short-lived popular rejoicing at a raising of the war shadow. And then there was the case of the Lancashire journalist. This man found out that the police had issued a warrant against a certain person; he sent the story to the Manchester *Daily Despatch;* the police demanded to know the source of the paper's information, and, under protest, the editor gave them the name of the journalist. The latter was then prosecuted by the police in the local court, under the Official Secrets Act, found guilty, and fined. He carried the case to the Court of Appeal, where it was dismissed by the attorney general who, when the act had been made law in 1919, had said that it only applied to espionage.

There was no question of espionage involved in this case; and, in consequence, one can only conclude that the Official Secrets Act is to be used to keep secret anything that the government wants kept secret. It is really quite odd that the government did not use it to hush up the case of the Lancashire journalist. One or two other points emerge from this case. The Press Association appealed to the home secretary to amend the act; Sir Samuel Hoare refused, but assured the press that they could trust him not to misuse the act! Then there was an interesting divergence in the way the press treated the verdict; all the provincial papers attacked the verdict, whereas the London papers had not one leader against it. The provincial papers are, of course, nearly all owned by the big newspaper groups which have at least one London paper as their leading organ. So one assumes that the London papers, being more closely under the eye and authority of their owners, were made to toe the line, and that most of these owners (as is certainly true of

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the Astors, who own the *Times*) are not interested in the freedom of the press. It also demonstrates that, in the newspaper world as in the world of big business, there is an ever widening gulf between the owners and the producers.

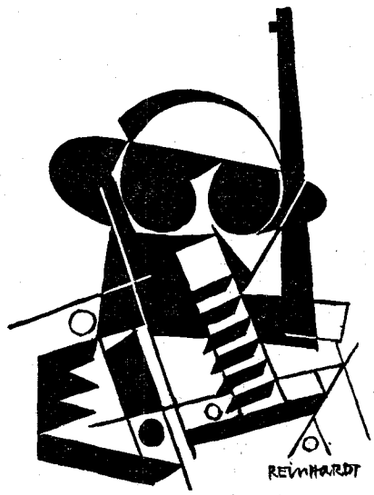
The Official Secrets Act is only one example of the legislation which has been arraying itself, since the end of the last war, against the forces of progress. We may single out the Incitement to Disaffection Act (1934), the Public Order Act (1936), and the Emergency Powers Act (1920). The first mentioned of these created such a storm in the country when it was introduced that it only got through Parliament after considerable dilution; it is still, however, a danger. It makes it an offense maliciously and advisedly to seduce any member of his majesty's forces from his duty or allegiance, and an offense to possess *with the intent to commit or abet the above offense,* any document of such a nature that the dissemination of copies among members of the forces would itself constitute the main offense. The italicized passage, an apparent safeguard, in fact would give an almost free hand to reactionary magistrates to convict in times of crisis on the evidence of police or agents provocateurs. The act is an obvious expedient by which the ruling class may keep their armed forces away from the influence of politics.

The Public Order Act, which was passed ostensibly to stop the wearing of fascist uniforms, would be satisfactory enough if it had stopped there. But it has also been invoked to suppress demonstrations of the working class, for it empowers the police to prohibit all public processions for as much as three months in any given district, if they are of the opinion that they cannot otherwise prevent disorder. This power again, to which all parties in the House of Commons assented, was aimed primarily to prevent the Jew-baiting marches of the fascists in the East End of London, but provides a most dangerous weapon by which a reactionary government could suppress democratic liberty of propaganda. Both these measures, at their inception, were given out as methods of dealing with the fascists. It is a well known tactic of fascism, by creating public disorder, to bring about a limitation of civil liberties which affects their opponents in the long run far more seriously than themselves.

The Emergency Powers Act provides in effect that if the government thinks the country is in danger of action, on the part of some section of the community, calculated to deprive the community as a whole of the essentials of life, it has the power to "proclaim an emergency"—or, in other words, to set up what would be very little different from a military dictatorship. As the author of *Justice in England* remarks, it is interesting to observe that the wording of this act "would cover some of the food restriction ramps. . . . But the act has not yet been invoked for these purposes. It was, of course, used in the general strike of 1926." The point about all this legislation is not that it is essentially bad or anti-democratic legislation, nor even that it was sponsored solely by conscious adherents of fascism (it wasn't and they weren't), but that, under certain circumstances, it could give a constitutional authority to anti-social and undemocratic practices. And a great many Englishmen are still willing to allow curtailment of their civil liberties provided that they are told it is being done in a constitutional way.

It is, therefore, not the legislation that needs altering first but the forces which might take a reactionary advantage of this legislation that need to be destroyed. There is, in fact, considerable danger in attempts to amend the law nowadays. An instance of this danger is the agitation to amend the Law of Libel. This law, as it stands at present, is very considerably more stringent in England than in the USA. Authors, newspapers, publishers, and printers live in constant terror of the libel action, for, under the present law, the plaintiff has no need to prove malice on the part of the defendant, and only needs to bring sufficient evidence that the writing, however unwittingly, has brought him into hatred or contempt. A novelist, his publishers, and printers, for instance, can suffer heavy damages because an entirely imaginary character in his novel has been identified with some living person. Even when the defendants are advised that they would win the case, they as often as not prefer to settle it out of court, knowing that they would not be granted costs. The unions of journalists and the various authors' associations have been urgently pressing for an amendment of the law. But many of us are now beginning to realize that, though such an amendment would enable us to have greater scope for criticism or exposure of public figures and current scandals, it might only too easily be turned against us. For, as the contradictions of capitalist society sharpen, the reactionary forces grow more and more unscrupulous in their methods of holding back progress, and a laxer law of libel would give them an opening for the kind of scurrility to be seen in Nazi newspapers and, with a few dishonorable exceptions, not indulged in by publicists of the left.

To conclude, reaction must be checked and destroyed at its source, not in its manifestations. We in this country have a great tradition of civil liberty, which has been hardly won and will not be easily preserved. In recent years we have seen grow up an increasing bias on the part of the police authorities against the activities of the left and a corresponding complacence towards those of the fascists. Our magistrates' courts, in which trials for minor political offenses are held, are nests of social and political reaction, for the magistrates themselves, with few exceptions, come from the privileged classes. We have to preserve a sleepless watch over our liberties at home; every victory in their defense means not merely a blow at reaction in England but a weakening of the forces of fascism throughout the world.



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If you've ever been a figure in the chamber of horrors
If you've ever escaped from a psychiatric ward
if you thrill at the thought of throwing poison
into wells,
have heavenly visions of people, by the
thousands, dying in flames

YOU ARE THE VERY MAN WE WANT
we mean business and our business is YOU

WANTED: A race of brand new men

Apply: Middle-Europe
no skill needed
no ambition required
no brains wanted and no character allowed

TAKE A PERMANENT JOB IN THE COMING PROFESSION
wages: DEATH.

KENNETH FEARING.

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Terror on the Airwaves

The Grimmest Hoax of the Age

GEORGE SCOTT

"TELL a big enough lie and the whole world will believe it."

The truth of that axiom invented by Adolf Hitler was proved up to the hilt again last Sunday night when Orson Welles and his "Mercury Theater on the Air" troupe threw the eastern part of the United States into mad panic by a brilliantly realistic presentation of H. G. Wells' old fantasy, *The War of the Worlds.*

It is not the broadcast itself, however, but the implication of the extraordinary reaction to it, that is important. The threat of war has become deeply implanted in people's minds by these years of fascist aggression. No horror is too great, no catastrophe too overwhelming, to appear possible. The calculated terror spread by the manipulators of Munich seemed suddenly to be actually at hand—in an entirely unexpected place, without a moment's warning—and many thousands of people believed it. It was death on the march, death dropping from the skies, bombardment, poison gas—no one stopped to think exactly what it was—and it fitted perfectly with the threats from Rome, Berlin, and Tokyo, with the stories of Guernica and Canton. This creation of panic among those who mistook a dramatization of an old novel for a news broadcast illustrates all over again the method by which Chamberlain and Daladier accomplished their Munich betrayal.

Several nights before the debacle the Columbia network presented Archibald MacLeish's equally realistic "Air Raid." But that story of the wanton destruction of a peaceful village was set somewhere in Spain or China or Ethiopia and the result was that it caused only a flutter of interest among listeners.

Then Welles got the brilliant idea of moving the locale of Wells' story to the Watchung Mountains of New Jersey and describing the descent of the Martians on New York in the same manner used by radio in covering the Czechoslovakian crisis. Immediately hell broke loose. Listeners, made jittery by the recent war scare, went mad with terror when it seemed that they themselves were to be the victims.

It's a safe bet that no reader of NEW MASSES was scared out of seven years' growth by those spectral Martians, but thousands of other people were. Seized by a mass hysteria which has few parallels in American history, they dashed from their homes seeking safety, pleaded with police for gas masks, offered their services to the National Guard, mobbed the churches, and otherwise conducted themselves exactly as the actors in a far away radio studio seemed to be doing. Completely out of their senses, they became pawns subject to the will of a superb actor. By this time you know the rest of the story.

Or do you? Listen to this:

Back in 1926, during the general strike in England, a detective-story writer named Father Ronald Knox used this same hair-raising technique in dramatizing a fictitious Communist uprising over the British Broadcasting Corporation network. So cleverly did he depict the rapine and murder supposed to be taking place in London that the entire country was thrown into a frenzy of terror. Of course the BBC apologized for the program later, but it had a great deal to do with the demoralization and defeat of the strike.

And, of course, Hitler and Mussolini used the trick in their attack upon Austria and Spain and Ethiopia and finally Czechoslovakia. Those who listened to the rebroadcasts of fascist programs over WOR during the latter tragedy could see plainly how the Germans were whipped to frenzy, the Sudetens egged on to excess after excess and the morale of the Czechs undermined by the endless barrage.

Luckily for America, it was an actor before that microphone the other night instead of a Huey Long or a D. C. Stephenson. Now that the cry of wolf has been raised over such a comparatively harmless matter, it will be a long time before the American public lets itself be taken in again in the same manner. And yet—the Republican Party, you know, moved heaven, earth, and everything but the Federal Communications Commission, in its effort to be allowed to dramatize campaign programs. And there must be many bright young men studying that radio script today and wondering how they can make capital out of it. At the same time liberals throughout the country have been given a shattering object lesson as to what might happen if the greatest propaganda medium ever invented should fall into hands willing to misuse it.

This does not mean, of course, that censorship by the government is the answer to the problem, as Sen. Clyde L. Herring of Iowa is suggesting as this is written, and as various pressure groups, Catholic and otherwise, undoubtedly will be demanding by the time it is published.

For one thing, the Columbia Broadcasting System has been scared stiff by the storm unloosed about its head and by the threatened FCC investigation and will never make the mistake of being too realistic again. For another, the thing needed is not more censorship, but less censorship and more education for the radio audience. It is entirely possible for the intellectual level of listeners to be raised to the extent that they would stop believing that all radio dramas were real. But that will only come through the vociferous demands of thinking people among that audience and not by government intervention.

And finally, let it be whispered that a great deal of this fuss has been whipped up by those bitter enemies of the radio—the newspapers. As was reported several weeks ago in NEW MASSES, the press took an awful beating by the networks in the coverage of the Czech crisis. As a result the monopoly investigation into broadcasting, for which the publishers had been largely responsible, showed signs of collapse. Is it any wonder, then, that they snatched at the *War of the Worlds* incident and played it up out of all proportion to its news value just to get even with a rival?

Americans hate to be made to look foolish and there was, undoubtedly, a lot of resentment among those who had been taken in by the broadcast. But if any real movement gets under way to hamstring radio as the result of the incident it undoubtedly will be the work of the press and other groups which long have had their knives out.

Of all the New York papers, only the *Post* and the *World-Telegram* had a kind word to say for CBS after the broadcast. Leonard Carleton, radio editor of the former sheet, pointed out that the whole misunderstanding was due to "dialitis"—the habit of switching from one program to another without paying attention to what is being tuned in. It was because of this, he maintained, that so many listeners failed to hear the reiterated announcements that the story was imaginary and were swept off their feet by the sheer force of the drama.

Alton Cook of the *World-Telegram* commented that the tip-off to listeners should have been that the time elements of the story were telescoped after the first few minutes of the program and also that H. V. Kaltenborn was not cutting into the program with his endless explanations of every phase of the "disaster."

There is one more curious item to be commented upon before *The War of the Worlds* broadcast takes its place with Richard Adams Locke's *Moon Men,* Edgar Allan Poe's trans-Atlantic balloon trip, George Hull's Cardiff Giant, and the ubiquitous Loch Ness Monster as one of the world's greatest hoaxes. That is the fact that children didn't believe the yarn for a minute!

Did you read reports of Little Susie, aged ten, running screaming through Central Park, or Little Bobbie, aged twelve, begging a policeman for a gas mask? No, indeed. While their white-faced elders were milling around in circles, the darlings, who have been brought up on a diet of "Buck Rogers," "Gang Busters," "The Shadow," and other realistic horror programs, went on playing with their toy machine guns and bombing planes. All of which suggests that, at long last, radio propaganda may develop its own anti-toxin.

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Basic Election Issues

ON NOVEMBER 8, millions of Americans will go to the polls to elect a new House of Representatives, one-third of the members of the Senate, and numerous state, county, and city officials. This is no mere off-year election. As the campaign has gathered momentum, there have emerged in varying degree in every state of the Union the basic political alignments representing the progressive and reactionary points of view—the democratic desires of the overwhelming majority of the population as against the pro-fascist aims of the small number of corporate overlords. That the majority continue to favor the New Deal program is attested not only by the persistence of President Roosevelt's personal popularity and by the victory of New Dealers in most of the Democratic primaries, but indirectly, yet no less significantly, by the "liberal" facade behind which Republican reaction is operating in many states. It is this unscrupulous "liberal" demagogy, ominously reminiscent of the "Socialist" demagogy of Hitler and Mussolini, that has made it possible for the Republicans and tory Democrats to make inroads among confused sections of the middle classes and farmers and to threaten many of the positions already won by the progressive forces.

In the last Congress a coalition of Republicans and Liberty League Democrats proved sufficiently strong to sabotage the major part of the New Deal program. On November 8 the Wall Street high command, which has poured millions of dollars into this campaign, hopes to tighten its grip on the next Congress and to take control in such states as New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Minnesota. A victory for reaction nationally and in those states where the New Deal forces are now at the helm would mean an intensification of the drive to castrate the National Labor Relations Act and a strengthening of those interests that are seeking to block any move to broaden and liberalize the Social Security Act. It would mean the frustration in large measure of the hopes of the farmers and middle classes whose justified grievances the Republicans are now so shamelessly exploiting. It would mean increasing the influence of those who would make the Munich betrayal the model of American foreign policy.

The choice lies with the American people next Tuesday. And what is at stake is not merely the kind of government that will direct the state and nation during the coming two years, but to a large extent the kind of forces that will control the Democratic convention in 1940 and the next national administration. The election of genuine New Dealers to both houses of Congress and the defeat of such men as Dewey in New York, James in Pennsylvania, Bricker in Ohio, Fitzgerald in Michigan, Stassen in Minnesota, and Merriam in California are essential for the maintenance and extension of democracy and the preservation of peace. A democratic front of united labor and liberal forces in every state—a front that will continue the battle after the election as well—can assure victory for the people.

Victory in Chile

THE people of Chile have won a magnificent victory. The election of Pedro Aguirre Cerda, the Popular Front candidate, over Gustavo Ross, the right-wing coalition candidate, will hearten the liberal and labor movements throughout South America. Dr. Aguirre's vote was originally announced as 220,892 against Ross' 213,521. On a recount, the margin of victory dropped to about 4,000 but there is no doubt about the actual winner. Nevertheless, the right has not yet given up. The government under President Arturo Alessandri, the real guiding force behind the defeated Ross, has appointed an "examining committee" to investigate alleged "frauds." The committee is not expected to render any decision before November 24 but the temper of the people is such that the Popular Front is not likely to be cheated out of its great victory.

The method by which Dr. Aguirre's candidacy was decided is instructive. A convention was called at which the Radical Party, generally representative of the urban middle class with influence among the peasantry and workers, the Socialist Party, and the Communist Party took part. After a good deal of indecision, agreement was finally reached upon Dr. Aguirre, a Radical. A few hours later, he attended the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of Chile and, in the words of Carlos Contreras Labarca, general secretary of the Communist Party, "extolled the unshakable and consistent unity policy of our party."

The election itself was somewhat complicated by the role of Gen. Carlos Ibanez, a third candidate until his putsch last month, when the government clamped him into jail. Ibanez received support from the small but violent Nazi party, but the main effect of his candidacy would actually have been to elect Ross. Once in jail, however, he seems to have turned against the government and instructed his followers to vote for Dr. Aguirre. There is absolutely no truth in the vague newspaper reports that the Nazis supported the Popular Front. Their entire activity was in precisely the opposite direction but Ibanez himself, the chief demagogue in Chilean politics, may have sought revenge for the failure of his coup.

The Soviet Union

WHAT about the Soviet Union? people say. Where does the Socialist republic fit into this darkening world picture? What will she do? How will she fare in the coming months and years?

The Soviet Union is twenty-one years old this week, and that fact alone is sufficient answer to doubters and hesitators. For twenty-one years the Socialist republic has lived, and grown, and built up its strength. Encircled by enemies, it has kept them all at bay. Attacked by traitors and turncoats within, it has overcome them. Challenged by the endless resources of technology abroad, it has built its own industry, its own army, its own cultural life and civilization. It has achieved that universal social security toward which the most advanced capitalist countries are just beginning to grope. It has solved a problem of national minorities infinitely more complex than exists in any other state, and solved it on the basis of justice and amity. It has uprooted the ignoble values of a profit-seeking semi-feudalism and replaced them with the shining values of free humanity. Through every provocation it has stood steadfast for peace through collective action against aggressors; and only a few months ago it demonstrated at Changkufeng that behind this peace policy was a people's army that would fight to defend every inch of Soviet soil. One of the first acts after Nov. 7, 1917, was the affirmation of the Socialist republic's policy of national self-determination. That promise has been kept, and today the Soviet Union, with more than 150 languages, is a living demonstration of the possibility of many peo-

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ples living and working together, and preserving their own cultures. Another of the earliest actions of Lenin was the effort to bring the World War to an end, and peace has been the dominant foreign policy of the Soviet Union ever since. From its first entrance into the League of Nations it has fought unceasingly for disarmament, for international security.

Twenty-one years old, a giant among the powers of the earth, the Soviet Union faces the future without doubts or fears. It has given the Japanese militarists one preliminary lesson and has a few more in store for the Nazis. People who talk of Hitler "marching in" to the Soviet Union apparently do not understand either Hitler or the Soviet Union. That is one walk Der Führer will never take.

Setback for Hague

THE dictatorial powers of Frank Hague, Mayor and Law of Jersey City, were scratched somewhat but not amputated by Federal Judge William Clark in a long and erudite decision in the suit brought against Hague by the CIO and the American Civil Liberties Union. The decision nailed Hague on several important points, but, in effect, it gave him enough outs to mean that the Bill of Rights is not yet a reality in Jersey City.

Take, as a case in point, the matter of labor organizers holding meetings in public places, probably the most disputed issue in this case. Under the terms of Judge Clark's injunction, a meeting may be held, without police interference, in a public park—*provided* the police do not set it aside for some other purpose, a baseball game, perhaps, or a church picnic. And if they do get a meeting place, they can say what they want—*after* the speech has passed through the hands of the police official in charge, which, considering Jersey City officialdom, would be about the same as allowing Herr Goebbels to edit distasteful political references out of this magazine. There remains the small consolation of holding a meeting in a private hall —*if*, with Hague's grip on local real estate, you can get a private hall.

The decision, of course, was not all bad. On the whole it tended to lessen Hague's power. But Hague's power covers a lot of territory, and it would take a good baker's dozen of the kind of decision Clark handed down to bring Jersey City within the realm of American democracy. Hague will be forced to abandon the rough stuff and the police deportations, but winning the freedom of the people of Jersey City will take more appeals to the federal judiciary and a good deal more popular struggle of the kind we have been seeing this past year.

The Noisy Network

ON THE same evening that the end of the world began near Princeton, N. J., upon the landing of a rocket ship from Mars, a doughty group of pre-shrunk patriots commingled together at New York's Hotel Commodore in the political interests of one John J. O'Connor and a cause almost as worthy as John himself—the fight against "Communism." Piteous bleats and shrill outcries were contributed by an all-star cast, led by Mrs. Elizabeth Dilling, the Carrie Nation of counter-revolution, author of the prettiest goblin story since the Brothers Grimm—*The Red Network*. Mrs. Dilling, who had been transported with great care and expense from the seat of her historical researches in Illinois, rendered an impersonation of Mrs. Roosevelt which included the line, "I am all for the comrats." This new number in her repertoire doubtless pleased the large crowd which included fraternal delegates from the VFW, the Catholic War Veterans, and three brothers of the shirt and crooked cross, captained by Herr Fritz Kuhn. Mrs. Dilling denounced Charles Poletti and Fiorello LaGuardia, along with the First Lady, as Reds.

Father Edward Lodge Curran characterized Communism as "twentieth-century paganism," and John J., himself, in a modest bit part, offered himself as "Exhibit A" in the purge of Roosevelt's Communist dictatorship. Until better exhibits come along, as the pathological affinities of fascism find each other, Mrs. Dilling will have to be Goebbels to O'Connor's Hitler, and Father Curran his Rosenberg. In the meantime the decent people of the Sixteenth Congressional probably prefer the New Deal to this camorra of knaves and buffoons newly met together.

Hitler Outdoes Himself

THE monstrous terror under which the Jews in central Europe exist can no longer be described in words which stem from the pre-fascist era. Hatred, cruelty, persecution, bigotry—these are hollow approximations of that barbaric riptide which is destroying everything human and decent. The events of the past week show how bottomless is the pit of fascist degradation. The mass emigration of Jews from Germany might in other circumstances have been welcome. But to be herded together like cattle, dumped on the border, without food or shelter, waiting blindly and desperately for some unknown fate, is a torture which is altogether unendurable. The Polish edicts barred all Jews traveling on Polish passports from reentrance into that country. These edicts were an expression of that brutal anti-Semitism in Poland which is perhaps less dramatic than Nazi race hatred, but almost as vicious and thoroughgoing. The Nazis seized the opportunity to round up Jews with Polish passports. They deprived the victims of their money and personal property. With merciless speed they dragged thousands of men, women, and children from shop, home, and school, and massed them at frontier stations, pending the outcome of "negotiations" with Poland.

We in America must do something, and we must do it at once. Sen. Robert F. Wagner told the American Jewish Congress this week that:

> Now is the time, before it is too late, before the lights of civilization go out completely, to unfurl the flag of common humanity, a flag stained with the blood of Christian martyrs and revolutionary heroes, and carry it again into battle for the salvation of mankind. . . .

Senator Wagner pointed out that:

> No perversion of the science of anthropology, no amount of nationalistic jingoism, can conceal the fact that the Jew is being persecuted today because he believes in freedom and has a heritage of democracy, and thus challenges the new dogma of dictatorship which is temporarily ascendant in Europe. . . . The Jews are but the first casualties, because they are defenseless. The Catholics have already felt the blow. The true objectives of these bigoted individuals is to destroy all religion, all freedom, to chain the human spirit and crucify the human soul.

The American State Department acted when Italy opened a drive against American Jews, and that action had some effect. But we also have historical precedent for acting in behalf of persecuted minorities which do not possess American citizenship. If we protested the Kishinev massacres, we can certainly protest the treatment of Polish Jews by the German government. Every American who feels a sense of responsibility toward humanity must bring pressure on the State Department to issue an official statement condemning the persecution of Jews in Central Europe. This is no longer a question of the "internal policies" of other countries. This is a question which deeply and immediately affects the fate of mankind.

Dies Gets Around

BEFORE it got out to the Middle West the Dies committee was able to some extent to maintain its pretense of being an "investigating" committee. What it was investigating was a bit uncertain and its tactics invited question, but its function as a campaign instrument was not yet obvious.

But since the Michigan, Minnesota, and California exposés no one, not even those who would normally be supporting Dies, can fail to believe that his committee exists solely

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to smear the New Deal. Hitting Michigan at the height of Governor Murphy's campaign for reelection, Dies did not even bother with the usual ritual of investigating what he chooses to call subversive elements, but plunged right into the Murphy-Fitzgerald battle by distorting the New Deal governor's role in the automobile strikes of 1937. That job done, his attention moved quickly to Minnesota for a little sniping at the Farmer-Labor Party and Governor Benson. Thence to California to give reaction a hand in the impending struggle there.

Dies got around fast but no faster than the denials and repudiations. Early last week President Roosevelt, heretofore silent on the Dies committee, issued a statement accusing Dies of meddling in the campaign, calling the committee "a coterie of disgruntled Republican job holders," labeling the whole investigation "un-American." Later in the week, after Dies had brought up the old "Deport Harry Bridges" issue, both the San Francisco American Legion and the Associated Farmers, the latter an anti-labor organization, repudiated the chief witness in the California hearings, Harper Knowles, who had claimed to represent these organizations. And on Monday evening when Dies defended his committee over a national network with a roundup of all the anti-Communist, anti-New Deal slurs and slanders and downright untruths he could pack into the fifteen minutes allotted him, he was answered by Paul Y. Anderson, Washington correspondent of the St. Louis *Star-Times* and the *Nation,* whose retort required no more than a running account of the way the Dies committee conducted itself.

The Dies committee has shown its hand in good time. Progressives have seen through its veneer from the beginning and it has now embarrassed the reactionaries by its clumsiness. Its lesson, however, should be one we have pointed to many times before: Red-baiting always has an intention that goes far beyond the Communists, and that intention is always to frustrate all progressive movements.

Civil-Service Workers

THE unionization of civil-service employees has made real headway during the past year. At the first New York State convention of the State, County, and Municipal Workers, a CIO affiliate, twelve thousand members and twenty-eight locals were represented. This impressive figure parallels the gains made in other white-collar and professional unions since the organization of the CIO. The realism and militancy of these new unions were reflected in the civil-service convention last week.

The municipal workers pledged their support to the American Labor Party, upheld the National Labor Relations Board, attacked the Dies committee, and laid plans for an extensive organizational drive. The new constitution outlines the aims of the organization: extension of the classified, competitive principle; opposition to discrimination; promotion by merit; extension of social legislation to include government workers; the five-day, forty-hour week; $1,200 minimum yearly wage; and preservation of the principle of "democracy in government and government for democracy." It is to be hoped that civil-service workers throughout the nation will swell the ranks of this progressive union during the coming year.

State Dept. Helps Franco

LAST week was a busy one for the State Department. If the department is investigated by the next Congress, at least one item in last week's calendar deserves sharp attention. It would throw some light on the activity of Joseph C. Green, in charge of Arms and Munitions Control, a minor office which became of vital importance with the passage of neutrality legislation. Mr. Green, it has been repeatedly whispered in Washington's inner circles, was chiefly responsible for the department's shady treatment of the Spanish republic during the first months of the war. Now Mr. Green, with the help of Mr. Hull, has gone and done it again.

On October 28, Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen, in their syndicated column, "Washington Merry-Go-Round," rattled some skeletons in the State Department closet. They revealed that Green had refused export licenses for planes to both Greece and Turkey on grounds that the planes had been ordered for the Spanish republic. All this was directly contrary to instructions from President Roosevelt that the United States "could not police the borders" of other nations "to account for the future destination of the planes," as Pearson and Allen put it. With this leak in the department's business by journalists known to have excellent pipelines in the right places, Secretary Hull rushed to Green's defense with a wordy statement which denied nothing but pleaded that the department had special information about the destination of the planes.

The whole episode is nothing less than an outrage. The Neutrality Act is bad enough but the application of the act by men like Green, Sumner Welles, James Clement Dunn, and others makes it even worse. For this country, through the same Joseph C. Green, is licensing the export of planes to fascist Germany and Italy. There is not the semblance of a doubt in any responsible person's mind that a portion of these planes, if not all, are trans-shipped into Franco Spain for use against the republic.

We favor two investigations: one of this country's foreign policy by the American people; the other of the State Department by Congress. The policy is bad and the department is worse.

No Railroad Pay Cut

ORGANIZED labor and the American people as a whole scored a sweeping victory this week when the Emergency Fact-Finding Board rejected the demand of the railroad employers for a 15 percent wage cut. Barring a sudden and unpolitic revolt on the part of the Wall Street bankers who control the nation's rail transportation systems, the pay-reduction threat is over.

Those who have had any doubt that organized labor must use its full strength politically to protect itself on the economic front can draw important lessons from the turning back of the railroads' demand for an industry-wide wage cut. For reactionaries gambled heavily on the success of this drive against workers' living standards. The railroad pay reduction was to be a prelude to similar action in every major industry in the country. Organized labor fought the proposed railroad wage slash on two fronts. Railroad workers all over the country held hundreds of meetings, many of them supported by the AFL and CIO together, to demonstrate their determination to fight the cut. The nearly unanimous strike vote showed the temper of railroad labor.

Of course the problems facing the railroads are by no means solved with the wage-cut threat over. President Roosevelt has suggested remedial legislation for the bankrupt roads. This will probably take the form of loans or subsidies of one sort or another—and such legislation can in no way solve the basic problem in the sick railway industry. It is clear that American railroads are hopelessly overcapitalized. Equipment is frequently obsolete, trackage is duplicated in many areas and lacking in others. Fixed charges, resulting from the fantastic "watering" of railroad stocks and bonds, are staggering burdens on both bankrupt and still solvent roads.

The only immediate—as well as final—answer to the railroad problem is government ownership—government ownership on a basis fair to workers and the public, not government ownership that assumes the Wall Street railroad debts. The rail wage-cut threat has been turned back. Now Wall Street must be prevented from raiding the public treasury to pay interest on its phony railroad stocks and bonds.

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Midwest Battlegrounds

The Election Prospects in Minnesota and Michigan

A. B. MAGIL

Minneapolis.

I LEFT Detroit with an Indian summer sun shining prodigally. I arrived the next morning in Minneapolis in the midst of the first snow of the year. But I found that the political climate in the two states was pretty much the same. In both, liberal government is fighting to continue the New Deal program, challenged by a reaction that is powerful and cunning and has at its disposal unlimited funds. In both, the AFL and the CIO are united in support of the candidates of progress. In both, it is the farmers and the small-town middle class that are the uncertain quantities, and these may prove to hold the balance of power. And in both, the Dies committee, realizing that the race is close, has attempted to tip the scales in favor of Republican reaction.

Neither Governor Murphy of Michigan nor Governor Benson of Minnesota is doing any coasting in this campaign. They know that they are in the toughest fight of their lives and that the difference between victory and defeat is likely to depend on a few thousand votes. Governor Benson has the advantage of having behind him a true people's movement, the Farmer-Labor Party, based on the trade unions, the farm organizations, the cooperatives, and other progressive groups. He has the disadvantage of having as his Republican opponent one of the cleverest demagogues that the new Bruce Bartonized Republican "liberalism" has yet produced. Governor Murphy, on the other hand, while more than a match as a public figure for Republican Frank Fitzgerald, is a New Dealer without a New Deal party. In some sections the Democratic Party in Michigan is beginning to assume the character of a genuine people's movement, but the party machinery as a whole is for the most part in the hands of right-wing politicians and careerists who are sabotaging Murphy's campaign. Perhaps this accounts for the fact that in Detroit, in contrast to Minneapolis, one is hardly aware that an important election struggle is in progress. A year ago when I visited Detroit, the entire city was throbbing with the battle in which the candidates supported by Labor's Non-Partisan League and other liberal groups sought to break the grip of the reactionaries on the city government. True enough, that was a local campaign in which local passions were more readily stirred up than in a state election. Yet the impression of general apathy this year is disquieting, though the fact that Wayne County (Detroit) has had the greatest registration in its history would seem to indicate that under the surface there is no lack of interest in the elections. It is clear that while Governor Murphy personally is waging a vigorous fight and raising the issues before the people, the politicians in control of the party apparatus are running a routine campaign. But these are not routine times, and if Murphy is to win, the average citizen will have to be roused to the danger that threatens from big business Republicanism.

Unfortunately, Labor's Non-Partisan League has not been in a position to be an effective force in the Michigan contest. The long months of factional dissension in the United Automobile Workers and the fact that the state organization of the LNPL was in the hands of the Lovestoneites, who opposed endorsement of Murphy, have weakened the league. Only in Wayne County is it showing some signs of life. One notable development, which is providing some measure of organized popular support for the New Deal state, county, and congressional candidates, is the people's legislative conferences that are being held in the various congressional districts. These conferences are bringing together representatives of labor unions, fraternal organizations, social and political clubs, and religious groups, for the purpose of endorsing candidates, adopting programs of proposed legislation, and organizing the machinery for carrying the issues to the electorate. The conferences will undoubtedly help greatly in bringing out the Murphy vote on November 8 and may very well become the nucleus of a genuine New Deal party in Michigan.

The Democratic Party has carried Michigan only twice since the Civil War—in 1932 and 1936, both years of Roosevelt landslides. But while Roosevelt won Michigan in 1936 by a plurality of 317,000, Murphy's plurality was less than 49,000. On the surface, therefore, it would appear that Michigan's New Deal Governor Murphy faces an almost insuperable task in his effort to carry the state in an off-year election. There are a number of factors, however, that tend to modify this gloomy picture. In 1934 the Democrats would in all probability have retained control of the state were it not for the fact that the administration of Gov. William A. Comstock betrayed the New Deal platform on which it had been elected and proved, in addition, to be one of the most corrupt in the history of Michigan. This year the Democrats operate under no such handicap. The administration of Governor Murphy has been genuinely liberal and, despite frequent opposition to his policies by the legislature, it can point to an impressive record of social legislation. And the New Deal administration has been exemplary in its conduct of government. Murphy's establishment of civil service in all departments has evoked howls from the Republicans and certain job-hungry Democrats, but it has strengthened him in public esteem.

Murphy's greatest asset, however, is the support of a powerful labor movement. Two years ago the automobile industry was largely unorganized. Today the United Automobile Workers, with its 400,000 members, is the second largest union in the CIO. It is true that the division between the AFL and the CIO and the factional struggle within the United Automobile Workers have done great harm and undoubtedly served to alienate certain middle-class and farm support from Murphy. But despite this, organized labor in this highly industrialized state is a towering factor in the elections and the recent settlement of the conflict in the auto union will help repair some of the damage done. (The Newspaper Guild, after conferences with the publishers, finally succeeded in inserting a quarter-page advertisement in the three Detroit dailies—all anti-New Deal—urging the reelection of Murphy.) Moreover, as in other states, the process of political realignment in Michigan is helping to clarify the issues despite the Republican confusion-sowers and the smear tactics of the Dies committee. Fitzgerald won the Republican primaries because he posed as the liberal alternative to the crudely reactionary Harry Toy, attorney for the Ford Motor Co. Many of those who voted for Fitzgerald can undoubtedly be won to the support of Murphy in the final election. An important reflection of the progressive ferment in the Republican ranks was the recent action of Chase Osborn, former governor of Michigan and dean of the state Republican Party, in urging the reelection of Murphy. President Roosevelt's rebuke to the Dies committee and his praise of Murphy's role in the auto strikes will also help galvanize the New Deal sentiment in Michigan and should mean many thousands of additional votes for the governor.

Frank Fitzgerald, Republican gubernatorial candidate, was governor from 1934 to 1936 and is a smooth and seasoned campaigner. It was during his administration that the Black Legion flourished and established close contacts with the Republican machine. Today the remnants of the Black Legion and every other reactionary group are again backing Fitzgerald. In Michigan political circles it is believed that several weeks before the primaries Harry Bennett, head of Ford's service department and his chief political fixer, realizing that Toy would be defeated, made a deal with Republican bosses Claude McKay and Ed Barnard to support Fitzgerald. The latter at first attempted to don the liberal sheepskin, but under pressure from Ford, he has been coming out into the open and directing his main fire at Murphy's labor policies and "spending," and echoing the Dies committee's charges of "Communism."

Ford and General Motors, while putting

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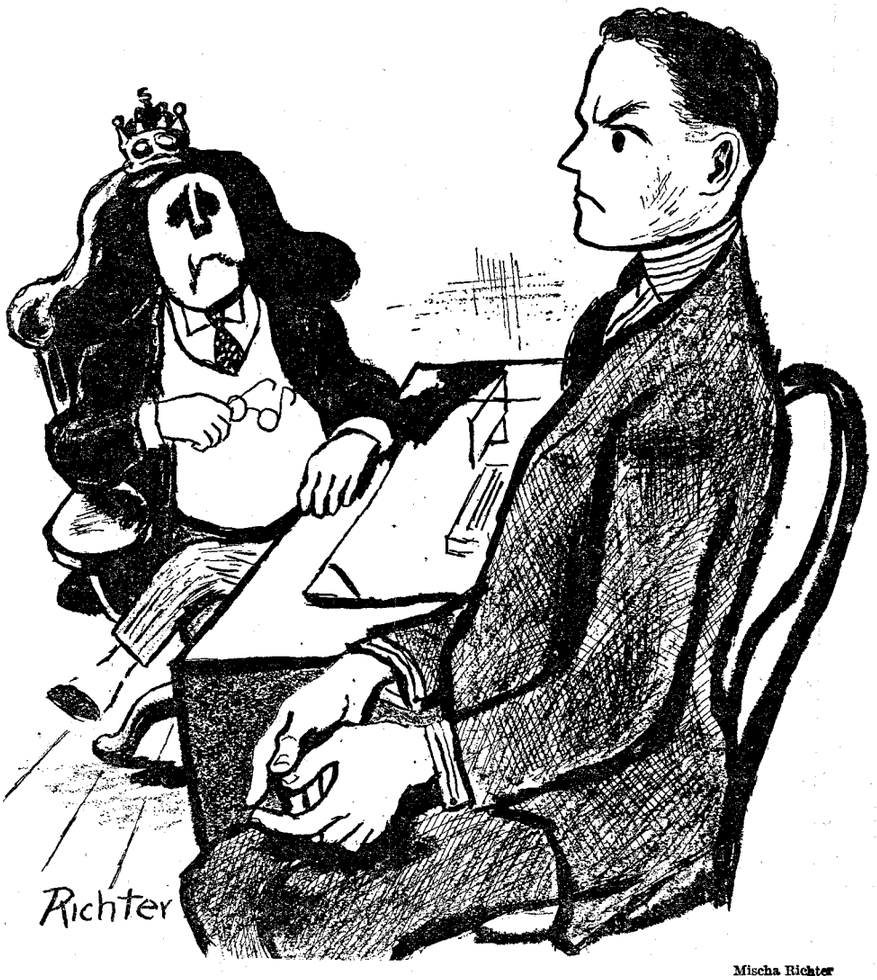
most of their eggs in the Republican basket, are not forgetting the right-wing Democrats. These are led by Highway Commissioner Murray D. Van Wagoner and include Lieut. Gov. Leo J. Nowicki, running for reelection. While the right wing does not dare openly to oppose the New Deal or Murphy, and was, in fact, unable to put up a candidate to oppose the governor in the primaries, it is doing its bit for the anti-New Deal cause through sabotage and the judicious knife in the back. While I was in Detroit, a remarkable incident occurred which indicates the more than platonic relations that exist between the Republicans and the tory Democrats. At a business men's banquet, at which both Murphy and Fitzgerald were speakers, the latter publicly endorsed Nowicki and predicted his election. It proved to be something of a political blunder, precipitating a minor civil war within the Republican ranks and bringing down on Fitzgerald the charge that he had betrayed his own candidate for lieutenant governor, Luren Dickinson. But the episode revealed the real alignment of forces that is shaping Michigan's political future.

In Minnesota the battle is sharper and the class lines more clearly drawn. For the first time since 1930, when the late Floyd B. Olson began the unbroken chain of Farmer-Labor victories, the Republican Party and its masters, the steel, packing, milling, and power trusts, the chain banks and the chain stores, see a possibility of a return to power. One Farmer-Labor leader told me that big business is spending $1,000,000 to elect Harold E. Stassen, Republican candidate for governor. Of this sum the steel trust alone is contributing $450,000. And it is money well spent from the point of view of the trusts. The administration of Governor Benson has sponsored and, despite a hostile majority in the legislature, has in large measure secured the enactment of what is perhaps the most advanced program of social legislation ever attempted in this country. Benson has hiked the taxes on the chain stores and the steel trust (most of Minnesota's rich iron mines are owned by the U. S. Steel Corp.) and lowered the taxes on homes and farms; he has defended the rights of labor, increased relief, and provided aid for agriculture. And he has pledged himself to do more.

In this overwhelmingly New Deal state big business and the Republican bosses have recognized that the only chance of ousting the Benson administration was by providing the Republican Party with a "liberal" front and organizing an unprecedented campaign of mass deception. Harold E. Stassen, thirty-one-year-old county attorney of Dakota County, has proved to be the man of the hour, and beside him has been placed as candidate for lieutenant governor twenty-six-year-old C. Elmer Anderson. As in the Dewey campaign in New York, the old guard has been thrust into the background—where it continues to pull the strings—while youth and "liberalism" have been brought to the fore. Of course, even Stassen has had to have his political face lifted. In 1936, for example, in a statement in the October 11 issue of the St. Paul *Pioneer Press,* he declared that "a most engaging smile, pleasing voice, and magnetic personality mask the most ruthless President the United States has ever known." And he concluded in raucous Hoover tones: "Those who seek the downfall of the American system are driving hard bargains with him who desperately and ruthlessly seeks a second term, and he assists them with utter disregard of the future and the fertile field he is creating for the breeding and growth of Communism, radicalism, and un-American activities. Truly it can be said of such stuff dictators are made."

But today Stassen is decidedly coy on the subject of Roosevelt and the New Deal. This daring young man has managed to swing his trapeze around and away from the issue of the New Deal in a manner that might well be the envy of a Dewey or a Barton. And what speeches he makes. Beside him Benson actually sounds like a conservative. On the good old Hitler theory that the secret of political success is the conscienceless deception of the people, Stassen has not only made succulent promises that are little short of a pledge to squeeze blood from a stone, but has blandly attempted to appropriate the Farmer-Labor tradition. In his keynote speech he said: " . . . this is not a campaign against the Farmer-Labor Party, but rather against that small group of political bosses who have taken the control of that party away from its rank and file and away from the ideals of its founders." And he has had the effrontery to pose as the political heir of Floyd Olson. Recently the parents of the late Farmer-Labor governor felt compelled to write Stassen protesting against this shameless body-snatching act and pointing out that when Olson was alive, Stassen was not among his supporters.

Behind this smiling liberal front, ugly influences are at work. Besides stock-in-trade Red-baiting, anti-Semitism and Negro-baiting, particularly the former, are being sedulously fostered by Stassen leaders. The fact that two or three Jews, among many non-Jews, are prominent in the Farmer-Labor Party is being played up in a way as to imply some sinister influence. And efforts are being made to create the impression that the Benson administration has loaded the state payroll with Jews, despite the fact that the number of Jewish state employees is proportionately less than the Jewish population of Minnesota.



Mischa Richter

"We want an impartial straw vote showing 90 percent of the people against the New Deal."

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Ray P. Chase, Republican candidate for governor in 1930 and now head of the Republican research committee, is the author of an expensively printed pamphlet, *Are They Communists or Catspaws?* with strong anti-Semitic innuendoes. During the World War Chase praised the activities of the Ku Klux Klan and was among those ardent patriots who hounded the foreign-born population of Minnesota. Another Republican leader, Roy E. Dunn, Republican national committeeman, in a recent radio speech also resorted to anti-Semitic insinuations. This is the same Dunn who was recently exposed by the Federal Trade Commission as a stooge of the farm-implement trust in its efforts to elect a subservient legislature.

The Nazis and the Silver Shirts have also thrown their support to the "liberal," Stassen. In an interview published in a recent issue of the *Minnesota Leader,* organ of the Farmer-Labor Party, T. G. Wooster, state führer of the Silver Shirts, boasted that he had met with Stassen and, at his (Wooster's) request, the Republican standard-bearer had removed an aide who had won the displeasure of the Silver Shirts. Stassen is also being backed by George K. Belden, president of the strikebreaking Associated Industries, who is an active supporter of the Silver Shirts. The character of the Silver Shirts' campaign against Benson may be judged from a recent confidential letter sent to leaders of the organization. The letter, a photostatic copy of which I saw, states:

> Governor Benson of Minnesota yesterday secretly informed dictator Baruch that Minnesota positively will find employment for, or otherwise take care of, five thousand of the 77,000 Jews who will get the bum's rush for criminal Communistic and anti-Christian activities in new German territories, in event of his (Benson's) reelection. Baruch, as we all know, is the Jew dictator who has controlled three national administrations. . . .
>
> If you don't want Jewish Communism with resulting violence, bloodshed, and civil war (and, of course, nobody does), get out at once and help defeat Benson and his criminal cohorts — with ballots.
>
> If it can't be done with ballots now, there must be bullets later!

This anti-Semitic campaign has reached such proportions that it has begun to alarm many Catholics, who feel that they will be the next victims. As a result, some Catholics, who have been wavering between Benson and Stassen, have already swung into line for Benson, knowing that his administration can be counted on to fight racial and religious bigotry.

The Democratic Party is playing a curious role in this election. In 1936 the Democrats entered into an alliance with the Farmer-Labor Party, withdrawing their own candidates for governor and United States senator, while the Farmer-Labor Party supported the reelection of Roosevelt. This year there was division within the Democratic ranks as to what tactics to pursue. Those in control of the party machine decided to put forward their own slate, with Thomas Gallagher, a liberal, as candidate for governor. The Democrats for the most part are refraining from criticism of the Farmer-Labor administration and are concentrating their attack on the Republicans. Though this undoubtedly helps the Farmer-Labor cause, the fact remains that in the elections on November 8 the Democrats are likely to funnel off liberal votes which the progressive forces of this state can ill afford to spare. However, large numbers of the Democratic rank and file, as well as some leaders, are showing a better understanding of the issues involved and are supporting Benson. Joseph Wolf, former Democratic national committeeman and one of the outstanding leaders of the New Deal wing of the party, has publicly endorsed Benson and declared that President Roosevelt desires his reelection. The Farmer-Labor Party, in turn, is demonstrating its desire to pursue a broad policy of unity of all progressive forces by withdrawing its candidate for Congress in the First District and supporting Ray G. Moonan, liberal Democrat and brother of the chairman of the State Democratic Committee. At the opposite pole a small number of reactionary Democrats, among them the state's only Democratic congressman, Elmer Ryan, are supporting Stassen.

In 1936 Governor Benson, making his first bid for elective office, defeated his Republican opponent by nearly a quarter of a million votes. Today he is fighting to win by a bare majority. The chief factor in this changed situation has been the factional struggle within the Farmer-Labor Party precipitated by Hjalmar Petersen, former lieutenant governor. Petersen, refusing to abide by the decision of the convention of the Farmer-Labor Association at Duluth last March, entered the primary against Benson with the open encouragement and aid of the Republicans. Though most of the Petersen leaders are now supporting Benson, the wounds dealt in the bitter factional fight have not entirely healed and the Republicans have made valuable capital out of the situation.

Another serious handicap to the Benson campaign is the activities of the Trotskyites. At the Duluth convention the Trotskyites, true to their role, supported the right-winger Petersen. They continued to support him until shortly before the primaries when, sensing the drift to Benson, they came out for the governor. Now they profess to be backing Benson and the whole Farmer-Labor slate though two years ago they declared that the "Farmer-Labor Party can only pave the way to fascism." Apparently they have decided that they can carry on their disruptive activity more effectively from within the Farmer-Labor Party than if they are outside looking in. The character of the Trotskyite's "support" was indicated in their open letter to Governor Benson which declared: "None of the measures outlined above can be carried out so long as the Farmer-Labor Party remains in Roosevelt's camp. Every proposal outlined can be won only by head-on collision with the Democratic machine." A break between the Farmer-Labor Party and the New Deal is a consummation that Stassen and his Republican stalwarts devoutly wish for. What makes the Trotskyist endorsement such a great liability is that in the public mind the Trotskyist Dunne brothers have become identified with racketeering and underworld violence. In the past year Corcoran and Brown, two leaders of the AFL Drivers Union, which the Dunne brothers control, have been murdered, and it is evident that the Trotskyites are up to their ears in this mess. When the Trotskyites embrace Benson, therefore, it provides the Republicans with an opportunity to smear him with the charge of corruption and racketeering.

And finally, there is the question of the role of the farmers and the small-town middle class in the elections in both Michigan and Minnesota. Agriculture exhibits the worst consequences of the concentration and centralization of capital and the general anarchy of capitalist production. In a big business monopolistic economy the production of agricultural commodities is still carried on largely on the basis of small, highly competitive enterprise. But monopoly has the upper hand—it sets the prices for both farmers and consumers and draws tighter the noose of mortgage debt by which the farmers are converted into bondsmen. When economic crisis comes and farm prices collapse, as has been the case during the past year, ruin advances even more swiftly than usual. The small business man, too, is caught in the wheels of monopoly economy, finds himself unable to obtain credit, and particularly in the small towns tends to regard organized labor with suspicion. Though the Benson administration has adopted measures to aid the farmers and small business men, to be truly effective, action must be national in scope. And it must be said that New Deal farm policies have fallen far short of New Deal objectives, while very little has been done directly to aid the little business men. That is why in Michigan, Minnesota, and other states the Republicans, unscrupulously exploiting genuine grievances, are making headway among the middle strata of the population.

Fascism feeds on middle-class discontent. Stassen in Minnesota, Fitzgerald in Michigan, Dewey in New York, are a warning to both the New Deal and labor. If democracy is to work, it must curb the monopolies and make life tolerable for the farmers and the middle classes. Only in this way can these groups be won to active participation, together with the workers, in a great people's movement for democracy, progress, and peace.

Suitcase Simpson, CIO

THE man with the biggest feet in the United States army wears nothing but CIO socks. The American Federation of Hosiery Workers, CIO, reports that a special government order was required for the size-14½ foot-ticklers.

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Tom Mooney Today

A Visit With Labor's Class-War Prisoner

DAVID McKELVY WHITE

THE visitors' waiting-room at San Quentin is very clean and very bright and very quiet. Beyond the tall windows at the end of the room, the sun shone brightly on the well kept lawn and the blue water of the bay. Inside, Jim and I, like the other dozen or so visitors, conversed in a hushed and vaguely guilty undertone.

After about twenty minutes, a door opened and a guard called out, "Mr. Murphy, Mr. White." We went through the doorway into a large room with a high ceiling. Across the four-foot wooden barrier that extended the length of the room, prisoners were talking to wives, families, friends. I have little memory of how many there were or of what they looked like, for Tom Mooney's face and personality and the quiet, easy authority of his voice are so commanding as to leave little opportunity for casual observation.

"I am very happy to see you, Mr. White." I was being greeted with great cordiality by a solidly built, healthy-looking man. He clasped my hand with both of his. "Chairman of the Friends of the Lincoln Brigade."

"Jim Murphy here is a veteran," I said, "and is in charge of the office here in San Francisco."

"We bring you the deepest respect and admiration from the men," Jim told him. "Especially Dave, for he was a member of the Tom Mooney Machine-Gun Company."

"Your company did me great honor and I am proud that they went into such crucial and important battles under my name. And now they are all coming back," he mused. "Well, there is much work here for brave men. Bringing them back and taking care of them is a big job. A very big job. How is your drive for money progressing?"

"Very well, but not fast enough."

"It's a trade-union responsibility." His voice rose and became more crisp. "It's especially a responsibility of the unions. These are union men, mostly. Many of them have written to me. And the fight against fascism is first and foremost labor's fight."

I reached for a pencil, but he raised his hand and shook his head. "No, you're not allowed to write in here. Remember what I say and write it down when you leave.

"Today more than ever Spain is the battlefield of world democracy. I most earnestly call upon all labor, organized and unorganized, to recognize the heroic service in labor's cause of the Americans who are returning from the front lines of this great struggle. Labor in America will be faced by many struggles. These men will be among its strongest and most courageous forces. Labor's most generous contributions toward their care and healing will be richly rewarded by their services in years to come. I . . ."

Tom had grown rather excited. Now he stopped abruptly and looked at Jim and at me with a sudden, slight embarrassment.

"You know how I feel about this," he concluded. "You will know how to finish the quotation."

Jim broke into the pause. "When the last of the men return, and that will be before very long now, they will hope to shake the hand of a free Tom Mooney."

Tom looked over our heads at the bright outdoors. Though he smiled, his eyes for the first time were tired. Three days before, the Supreme Court, on a technicality and over two dissenting votes, had refused to consider his case.

"Every prisoner must build castles in the air. I am an old hand at it by now. I have learned a good deal. I know that the world does not altogether collapse when these castles crumble. Still . . ." He shrugged his shoulders and smiled at us apologetically.

"And now you have turned the case back to Merriam?" I asked.

Tom laughed briefly. "For many reasons it is of great importance to us here in California that Olson be elected governor. I am anxious to do everything in my power to assist him. I, in common with the labor movement and all supporters of honest and progressive government, have much to gain from his victory. So I am putting Merriam finally and definitely on the spot. His latest excuse has been that he has no jurisdiction so long as my case is involved in the courts. So I have withdrawn all pleas from the courts and placed the question squarely before him. Besides," he tilted his head and pursed his lips judicially, "the man has a right to his last chance."

And this was all Tom Mooney had to say about the world-famous Mooney case, a case so famous that all over the earth there are men and women who know of the United States principally as the country which has kept a patently innocent man imprisoned through long years of scandalous injustice. In Spain men of all nationalities would wring our hands in congratulation and gratitude for our having inscribed the name of Tom Mooney on our company banner.

In fact, in over an hour and a half of talk, this was almost the only time he would allow us to talk about Tom Mooney at all. I said once that I hoped he felt as well as he looked. He replied briefly that he had not been feeling at all well lately. Kidney trouble. But he expected that it was not serious.

And he did express satisfaction concerning his present job in the prison hospital, partly because it permitted him more frequent access to a radio. That he had made the most of this opportunity was amply evident.

In the give and take of the discussion the quickness of Mooney's mind and the keenness of his analysis were everywhere apparent. I was particularly impressed by the way in which he stressed the interrelation of all the questions we discussed. He was constantly turning back to the international situation. He referred to the shameful betrayal of the Czechoslovakian people at Munich and the relation of the events and motives surrounding that, to China, Spain, and the events and forces in our own country.

"I am constantly impressed by the bold and heroic relief into which those events place the magnificent struggle of the Spanish people in the midst of all this double-dealing and dishonesty. We can all feel vindicated as human beings by the nobility and courage of Spain. Democracy has not lost its savor nor its powers and inspiration while such a struggle against such gigantic odds can be carried on by an embattled people month after month and, now, year after year." Tom paused and sighed. "It makes me very sad when I look out at the world and see the magnificent ingenuity and inventiveness of mankind all intensely concentrated at the present time on instruments and methods of destruction."

We sat for a moment in silence, all of us thinking, I am sure, of the experimental bombs falling in Barcelona, of the hidden secrets of death lying in the archives and warehouses of the war departments of the world, thinking with horror of the moment when these may be unleashed on mankind.

Tom roused himself. "But Spain and Czechoslovakia have opened the eyes of millions of people. They have even served to clarify our local issues. They have served to define more sharply the qualities and aims of our American tradition. They have stimulated and vastly broadened the possibilities for the whole progressive movement. We know more definitely now our enemies, and we can and will combine to fight them."

A guard touched me on the shoulder, and Jim and I rose to leave. Tom again shook us warmly by the hand. "You must give my heartiest best wishes to every one of the men returned from Spain. You have got to take good care of them. We have all got to pitch in and help you do it. *Salud!*"

As Jim and I walked out again into the sun, it was some time before we spoke. We were both thinking, I am sure, of the keenness of mind and nobility of spirit of the man we had just left. He had scarcely spoken of himself at all. An egotist? He had dismissed Westbrook Pegler with a generous scorn: "A vile stooge, of course." He shrugged his shoulders. "A minion."

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The Call to Arms

For Liberty

Thus Would Have Been Spain

Castelao From Galicia

FIRST, the facts of Alphonse Castelao: a graduate of medicine who never practiced, a celebrated newspaper caricaturist in Spain, author and illustrator of a half-dozen novels, teacher of drawing, operatic composer, authority on Iberian folk art, member of the Spanish Cortes from the Galician Autonomist Party ("a party that has been completely wiped out by Franco"), and a man who makes his living as a statistician in the Government Census Bureau. He is everything Franco hates, one of those extraordinary Spanish intellectuals who were unknown to the world until the shells that smartly drilled the Prado knocked down the walls around Spanish culture for the world to see.

Galicia, his province. ("My province is open and free with small farms in low, rolling hills. The *castros* by the sea are like the cliffs of Ireland. It rains a lot in Galicia; we have days and days with no sun. You should have seen the camellias around my house in Coruna which the fascists burned. You should see Rianxo, the little fishing village where I grew up.") Galicians are Celts, blue eyes and big bones, part of the pre-Christian migration to Europe that swept on north to Ireland. July 7, 1936, Castelao was in Madrid, bringing the results of a poll on Galician autonomy. General Sanjurjo was killed in an airplane crash, an English millionaire flew Franco in from the Canaries, garrisons rose in the towns and cities. It was thought inadvisable to leave Madrid; there was a rumor of fighting in the mountains. Castelao stayed and his life was saved.

Alphonse Castelao will go here and he will go there, speaking to Galicianos all over the world, and he will leave everywhere these strong words of civilized man—his pictures of the last two years in Spain.

—J. D.

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Readers' Forum

Railroad Myth

TO NEW MASSES: I want to take exception to a few things in Ernest Dore's article, "Railroad Profiteering," appearing in your issue of October 25. And, in particular, I want to say something about the word "wasteful," used frequently in the article, as to how long ago it was a word of little meaning, and of recent times has become a spook of terror among the railroad fraternity.

Once upon a time, back in the early eighties, when the railroad unions were forced to seek safety of life and limb through legislation, the railroad moguls and their lobbyists filled the pages of the press and the halls of Congress with cries of "wasteful!" Why electric headlights on locomotives, they argued, while not half the towns along the line have anything bus gas and kerosene streetlights! Automatic couplers cost too much to maintain. The link and pin are good enough. Anyway, the trainmen won't keep their hands from between the couplers. We don't want 100 percent airbrake equipment on our trains either. An air compressor big enough to pump all that air would leave no room on the engine for more important equipment. And a grab iron and a stirrup on each corner of a railway car, the railroad moguls cried louder, are the height of extravagance. Too many grab irons will confuse our switchmen. They'll grab the wrong iron and step in the wrong stirrup at the wrong time, and so many men will get killed anyhow.

This was the kind of argument the railroads put forth to save dollars in those days. But the unions made them spend their money, and through their early battles to make life safe on the railroads we now have every form of safety devices. As a matter of fact, we fought twelve years for the grab iron and stirrup on each corner of a car. This was a victorious battle against the railroad's cry of "wasteful." But, of course, the real issue of the struggles was whether the companies could dispense with certain mechanical appliances which we claimed were essential for safe and efficient operation of their trains. These mechanical appliances were only inanimate things, and had a more or less isolated connection with essential human needs. Now the railroads are using the same old word "wasteful," but in reference to animate human things.

In Ernest Dore's article, using the word in the above sense, he almost builds up a case for the railroads. He speaks of dispensing with "wasteful competition." He advocates abandonment of all parallel lines, both East and West. Practically, it would mean nothing for the roads, other than to build in both regions a network of branch lines to serve industry and agriculture long established on the lines. As to his "long haul" routing of shipments over the greatest distance by the roads, he is all wrong. That was done during the war to discredit government ownership, but now the traffic departments of the big shippers choose the shortest and fastest lines for their traffic business.

But back to "wasteful competition," and here is what it means. A consolidation plan which was once okayed by Joseph Eastman, now Federal Transportation Coordinator, will well illustrate the point. Only Joe Eastman had another word for it; he called it "dual service." His place of consolidation was right here in Chicago, the "hub" of all Eastern and Western lines. His plan called for a rearrangement of terminals which would save the railroad an estimated cost of $10,502,245 annually. Think what this would mean to railroad employees of Chicago and thereabouts, when you take Daniel Willard's statement for its full worth. Willard, who is president of the B&O, said before a congressional committee that 80 percent of the savings through consolidation would come out of the workers' pockets. Is it any wonder "wasteful" is a railroad hobgoblin? Eastman wanted to reduce the twenty-one major switching yards to eight, the present eight passenger terminals to four, and route all intercity freight over the Chicago River as between certain LCL terminals. Of course with the culmination of Eastman's plans to eliminate "dual service," or "wasteful competition," if we use Dore's phrase, no less than ten thousand men would be cast out into the streets of the city as things costly and useless. And, believe me, no little fear still hangs over the heads of these thousands of railroad employees. All remains now, with the last reports, is that two big railroads must come to an understanding on just compensation for abandoned property.

But such objectionable starvation can be beaten by the unions in the same manner as in the old days when we obtained "wasteful" safety appliance which to this day is saving our lives and limbs. The Minneapolis & St. Louis RR is a case in point. The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy gained control of the line a few years ago, and when it had absorbed all the M&St. L railroad's traffic, it decided to junk the thousand miles of tracks and also some two or three thousand employees. But it didn't do it, thanks to the fighting railroad unions, and the progressive Farmer-Labor Senator Shipstead of Minnesota. He stopped the steal of the M&St. L and had its connection with the CB&Q severed. Today the road is meeting its obligations regularly under honest and sincere management elected by the original stockholders.

In Kansas city, the railroad unions were confronted with the same stark terror of consolidation. Their terminals were to cast off some eight hundred men as waste. But the unions went to the state capital of Missouri and had sufficient anti-consolidation legislation passed to block the move for good. In Ohio and Texas the same situations exist, with the unions fighting hard. The present dismissal-wage agreement in any of its many phases will not equal a steady job. The railroad men know this too well. Nor is the six-hour day anything to place hope in now. Maybe later, or too late. The thing is to carry on the fight of old, and the unions are bound to do this, principally because we have been schooled to know the word "wasteful" now means "Let 'em starve."

W. P. ROBINSON,
Switchmen's Union of North America
Chicago. *Lodge No. 177.*

This Is Their Home

TO NEW MASSES: We would like to call to the attention of NEW MASSES readers the plight of more than a dozen former veterans of the International Brigade of the Spanish People's Army who are being held for exclusion from the United States. All of these men formerly lived in the United States before going to Spain and many of them have families and friends in this country.

Among those being held are Hugo Hermann Kolping, a German, who lived in the United States from 1923 to 1937; Herman Engert, German, who first came to the United States in 1926; Henry Albertini, an Italian school teacher who lived in the United States from 1914 to 1937; Mirko Markovich, a Serbian, and former battalion commander of the International Brigade, who entered the United States in 1930 as a seaman; Juan Molina, a Spaniard, married to an American citizen who was in the United States from 1917 to 1937.

The American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born is seeking for those who have visas, or who were legally in the country, the right of permanent entry into the United States. For those who are illegally in the United States or stowed-away, we seek the right to enter the United States for a short period of from three to six months, with or without bond, or with a reasonably small bond so that their status can be straightened out either by leaving the country and returning if permission is granted, or by finding a permanent place for these men.

We urge readers of NEW MASSES to send letters and telegrams to Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins petitioning her to exercise the discretion granted her by the law to permit these men to enter the United States.

REV. HERMAN REISSIG, Chmn.
American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born.
New York City.

Essay Contest

TO NEW MASSES: Please extend us your columns to inform the alumni of the Workers School about our essay contest we are now preparing to celebrate the Fifteenth Anniversary of the school which takes place Friday, Dec. 16, 1938, at Mecca Temple, New York City.

All students who are now attending or have attended the Workers School are eligible to enter this contest.

The conditions follow:

1. "What the Workers School Means to Me" is the subject.
2. The essay is to be no more than three hundred words and is to be written on one side of the paper only.
3. Essays must be in the office of the school, 35 East 12th St., New York City, not later than 10 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 30, 1938.
4. The school board, consisting of sixteen members of the faculty will be the judges.
5. The first prize is a two-year scholarship, listed on page 9 of the school catalogue—a total of *sixteen courses; the second and third prizes* are $15 and $10 worth of Marxist-Leninist books.
6. In the event of a tie, duplicate prizes will be given.

For further information please communicate with the Workers School.

A. MARKOFF, Director,
New York City. *Workers School.*

Letters in Brief

J. A. McG., of New York City, writes to suggest that NEW MASSES readers constitute themselves members of correspondence groups, organized in all sections of the country, to write a number of letters each week to local newspapers and magazines, explaining and urging support of progressive issues such as a broadened New Deal, CIO organization, collective security, etc. . . . The League of American Writers is assembling material relating to the Russian poet Pushkin, for exhibition in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow. Copies of translations of Pushkin's works, as well as newspaper or magazine articles, books, or manuscripts about Pushkin himself, are requested for donation to the museum's permanent collection. Such contributions may be sent to the league at 381 Fourth Ave., New York City.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Funeral Is Off Again

PROLETARIAN literature is a mean old corpse. It just won't stay buried. Every bourgeois critic has at one time or other taken his turn at nailing down the coffin, only to be confounded next month with the miracle of resurrection. Who is not familiar with the literary Office of the Dead? "Propaganda has at last destroyed the soul of art. . . . The party line has choked the writer's creative spirit. . . . Writers of the left have been robbed of all moral perspective. . . . Alas and Amen." But the echo of this banal dirge inevitably returns to mock the melancholy choir.

Consider the O. Henry Memorial Award for the best short stories of 1938:

First Prize: Albert Maltz, for "The Happiest Man on Earth."

Second Prize: Richard Wright, for "Fire and Cloud."

Third Prize: John Steinbeck, for "The Promise."

That is exciting news. Obviously, something has been going on around here, and the secret has exploded in somebody's face. No previous O. Henry top awards—and this is the twentieth year—have gone to writers like Maltz and Wright, who have been so consistently and uncompromisingly identified with the social literature of the left. The choice of Steinbeck makes this year's awards a clean sweep for the League of American Writers, which Harry Hansen, editor of the *Prize Stories* (Doubleday, Doran. $2.50), bitterly attacked last year. What significance can we attach to this phenomenon?

First of all, let us look at the judges. Harry Hansen, literary editor of the New York *World-Telegram,* worked with a jury which included Irita Van Doren, editor of "Books" of the *Herald Tribune,* Edward Weeks, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly,* and Fred T. Marsh, reviewer for the New York *Times* and other publications. Now, nobody would have been surprised to discover that Granville Hicks placed Albert Maltz and Richard Wright toward the top of the American short story for 1938. Hostile critics might have ascribed the choice to "politics," and I am afraid that some people who have progressive and even revolutionary convictions might have partially discounted the choice on the ground that the left was "over-compensating" for its mistreatment by the right—so far have some of us been persuaded by our school-teachers and newspaper reviewers! But nobody, certainly, would accuse Mr. Hansen, Mrs. Van Doren, Mr. Weeks, and Mr. Marsh of an overweening desire to push the claims of revolutionary writing.

What has happened, then? Does all of this prove that there is no such thing as a class orientation in literature? Does it indicate that our conservative critics and editors have at long last recognized the real meaning of the social movement in literature? Not at all. The other judges would undoubtedly subscribe to Mr. Marsh's remark in his recent review of *The Way Things Are:* "I think it must be tough on a sensitive artist like Maltz to hew to the party line. . . . Maltz, as I think, should detach himself from political and social movements, function as an artist, dramatist, story-teller. . . . " To be sure, the corpse has been invited to a banquet in his honor; but the hosts have worded the invitation so carefully that the unaccustomed guest may be shown the door after the first course. We ought to congratulate Mr. Hansen and his jury for their honest, independent, and discriminating selection. While the choice was unavoidable—and it has been unavoidable for some time—it is nevertheless a tribute to the committee that it refused to ignore writers who in effect contradict the jury's theory of what writers ought to be like. But it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the judges, and bourgeois critics in general, completely miss the point about the literature of our time. They have to recognize a Maltz or a Wright; they will hail Odets and Irwin Shaw; they will applaud Aragon and Malraux; they will praise Stephen Spender and C. Day Lewis—but they will conscientiously turn their back on the great literary movement of which these writers are individual expressions.

Thus, Mr. Hansen writes of Maltz's prize-winning story that "it is far more than that type of realistic reporting so popular with authors of the proletarian short story." Maltz,

Charles Martin

you see, is an *exception.* Thus, Mr. Marsh warns Maltz that Gorky "was not a schoolmaster but an artist." Gorky, you see, was an *exception.* This theory of exceptionalism is a second-line trench in the ordered retreat of bourgeois criticism. When you are driven to the point where you simply have to acknowledge the strength of a proletarian writer, you begin to admire him on the ground that he is not really a proletarian writer. In the theater, one can see the stages of retreat very clearly. When *Peace on Earth* by George Sklar and Albert Maltz appeared in 1933, Gilbert Gabriel pointed out that under the NRA there was no social injustice, and the play was therefore unreal. Brooks Atkinson pronounced it hysterical and shrill, though he admitted that it made one "furiously to think." In the first stage, then, you denied the left-wing playwright's vision of social reality. This corresponded to the political attack on Marxism as an "exaggeration" of social injustice. Then everybody got used to the idea that society was not in good shape. Along came Odets, who was accepted because he was "different" from the other social playwrights. The movement to which he owed his vision and his power was frowned upon. Sometimes that movement was dismissed as an encumbrance, as when John Mason Brown advised Odets that he must "choose" between being a partisan writer or a playwright. Today, one doesn't hear so much about exceptionalism in the theater. It would be daring to treat the following as isolated writers: Clifford Odets, John Howard Lawson, Lee Atlas, John Wexley, Sidney Kingsley, Irwin Shaw, Lillian Hellman, Paul Peters, Albert Maltz, George Sklar, Marc Blitzstein, and so on.

The point is that you cannot treat people like Maltz and Wright as exceptions. They are a part of the great social and literary movement of our time. They are good writers because they are good craftsmen, certainly; but far more important, because they embody so richly the experiences and the values of masses of people struggling for a society free from exploitation. I spoke to both Maltz and Wright after the prize announcement had come through. They insisted that their work was part of a larger movement of work, and that anybody who failed to see that failed to see the significance of this year's awards. Wright pointed out that the new life in the short story is due to the fact that writers

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are not working in terms of technical formulas, rules, or abstract theories, but under the compulsion of giving expression to what is valuable in our lives today. Behind good writing today, he said, is a writer's concern for the preservation of values which he hitherto took for granted and which are now being threatened. "Some critics might attempt to explain the new departure in the short story in terms of a reaction against the old stereotyped plot-detail. This would be an academic view of what is happening in the field of writing. That three writers possessing definite social commitments should win the O. Henry awards is proof of the fact that more than a mere technical consideration has been at work." Maltz was equally emphatic. He pointed out the contradiction in Mr. Marsh's advice that he "detach himself from political and social movements." The critic was advising a writer, whom he had just praised for his sensitivity to human misery, to move away from the very things that were moving him.

In a letter to Franz Mehring, Rosa Luxemburg once wrote: "You have taught our workers, by every line from your splendid pen, that Socialism is not a mere knife-and-fork problem, but a cultural movement, a great and proud attitude toward life." This proud attitude toward life is more than a literary phenomenon. It is not a matter of a literary season or two. It is expressive of a great social and cultural rebirth; and in a world where millions of men and women are fighting for freedom and happiness, for the very existence of civilization, the writers who share the vision of Rosa Luxemburg are the only writers who have anything fine and important to say. It is surely no accident that this week witnesses the publication of two magnificent novels, by André Malraux, who fought with the International Brigade, and Louis Aragon, who edited *l'Humanité*. It is historically just that during the same week an American literary jury should award the first two prizes in the short story to a young Negro from Mississippi and a young Jew from New York—both Marxists. How I wish that I could cram this tremendous fact down every fascist throat.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

John Strachey on America

HOPE IN AMERICA. *The Struggle for Power in the United States. By John Strachey. Modern Age Books. 50 cents.*

JOHN STRACHEY has undertaken to examine in a fluent and effective style the economic and political outlook for America. In his latest book, *Hope in America,* he sets out "patiently to explain" our times and our prospects to that audience which Granville Hicks has called the "middle middle class."

John Strachey has contributed a very use-

Fred Ellis

ful book. But his courageous pioneering in a hitherto neglected field of writing raises problems that Strachey has not wholly solved. The difficulties of analyzing the intricacies of the American scene in the short space at Strachey's disposal and in the language of his special audience have beguiled Strachey into generalizations which at times amount to vulgarizations. That is the danger and the challenge of pamphleteering of this type, a risk which Paine and Marx and Lenin surmounted but which Strachey does not wholly avoid. The important thing, however, is that Strachey has attempted what must be done. His shortcomings can be avoided in future attempts to use this same method. What has handicapped Strachey in the present book is, it seems to this reviewer, his choice of the American scene as his subject. Lack of familiarity with day-by-day events and with ideas current in this country mislead him now and again into oversimplification and misplaced emphasis.

Hope In America discusses the economics of depression and the present crisis of capitalism. Strachey takes as his premise the overwhelming desire of the American people for peace and security. Peace, however, cannot be preserved unless the forces driving toward war are routed. Strachey contends that, to accomplish this, more is required than the passive acceptance of the methods of a declining capitalism. "How does the present system work?" he asks, and in sketching the outline of our economy, he explains the historical position of the New Deal and its challenge to fascism. The progressivism of the Roosevelt administration, he adds, cannot finally fulfill the needs of the American people. What, then, can we put in the place of capitalism? Strachey's answer is Socialism. He indicates how Socialism works, what it means, how it can be realized. "There is hope for America," he concludes, but the hope lies in achieving knowledge that will give the American people the ability to avoid the mistakes that have already had such disastrous consequences in Great Britain.

> *A lack of consciousness has always been the weak spots of both the British and American labor movements. . . .* American labor has an immense opportunity to rally to it the whole American people, with the exception of the tiny possessing class. For the people of America are a people who labor by hand or brain. In this lies their hope; in this lies their fair opportunity to build themselves a world fit to live in.

Those parts of *Hope In America* that discuss Socialism, how it can be won and what it promises, indicate Strachey's masterly ability to explain intricate ideas to the middle middle class. But his discussion of present-day America is not always so successful. It is in the spirit of admiration for the experiment that Strachey makes and for the general high quality of this book that I question certain aspects of *Hope In America.*

At one place, the reader is pulled up suddenly by a sub-head which states: "America Is Anti-Imperialist." The shortcut of oversimplification here fails to lead Strachey to his destination. What he really wants to say is: "The American People Are Anti-Imperialist." The text to some extent corrects the sub-head, but again there is a failure clearly to differentiate between the desires of the American people and the workings of monopoly capitalism in the United States. For it is unfortunately true that while the majority of people in this country are opposed to armed conquest and everyday become more suspicious of the export of capital, the imperialist section of monopoly capitalism still dominates certain quarters of the State Department and still has the power greatly to influence foreign policy. Thus it is hardly exact—and, to my mind, it is dangerously misleading—to state, as Strachey does:

> America seems to have turned her back on the imperialist road; she seems to have her feet planted more or less firmly upon the road which leads to solving the problem by means of making her own population the ultimate market for her goods.

Aside from the obvious distortion of the last phrase, the sentence would better have read, "The masses in America seem to have turned their backs on the imperialist road," etc. Even so, it could be argued that American imperialism, unlike British and French imperialism which Strachey understands so well, never received more than momentary support from the general public. It is therefore inaccurate to state that at the present time the masses "have turned their backs on imperialism" when they never approved it. Rather, the American people in their fight for the preservation and extension of democracy have more and more challenged the foreign policy of the State Department. A people, organized into a strong democratic front, certainly could go far in preventing big business from pursuing its course of imperialist expansion. Yet we must beware that we do not fall into the error

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of thinking that we have reached the goal before it is actually won.

Moreover, Strachey does not make it sufficiently clear that opposition to President Roosevelt's policies has not enlisted the wholehearted support of all American capitalists. As Strachey acknowledges elsewhere, we in this country recognize that Roosevelt and the New Dealers are wholehearted in their defense of the profit system. Roosevelt's program is based on the belief that capitalism can be preserved by granting certain important concessions to the masses, concessions that will broaden democracy and resist the drive toward war and fascism of the small group of monopoly finance capitalists, the most reactionary section of the owning class. The contradictions within the system itself aid the working class and its allies among the farmers, liberals, professionals, and other middle-class groups to fight reaction. We must be careful not to be misled into thinking that Roosevelt's final objectives and the final objectives of the people are identical. At present, in the struggle to defend capitalism, the administration advances measures that the majority can seize upon to improve the general standard of living. The majority, on the other hand, fights for a better life, not to preserve capitalism but solely because security is the most pressing need of the American people. This struggle can never be relaxed under capitalism. The attempt to raise the standard will continue, the perspective will broaden, the majority will finally understand that only through Socialism can they fulfill their desires. The New Deal is advantageous to the majority who look upon it as their program for progress and democracy; the New Deal is likewise advantageous to those capitalists who see in it a measure of protection against the decline of the system. Thus, the ultimate goal of the New Deal envisaged by the people and its ultimate purpose as envisaged by Roosevelt and the hard-pressed capitalists who support the administration are far from the same.

The chapter "Giving People the Money" illustrates again the danger of too limited an approach to such a difficult problem as the distribution of purchasing power. By neglecting the questions of taxation, production, the resources of America, and other elements that a full discussion must include, Strachey's arguments sound startlingly similar to a restatement of the spurious panaceas sweeping certain sections of the country. That Strachey's analysis contains the germ of a correct idea is not sufficiently apparent to the reader. Instead, those unfamiliar with the question of money would easily be confused and, to some extent, prepared to accept the false "cures" preached by political opportunists and demagogues.

These criticisms indicate that *Hope In America* does not accomplish all that Strachey set out to do. Yet it must be stressed that the book has great value to the middle middle class as an introduction to politics and economics. It can prove a stimulus to the reader to go farther in his studies. If this happens,

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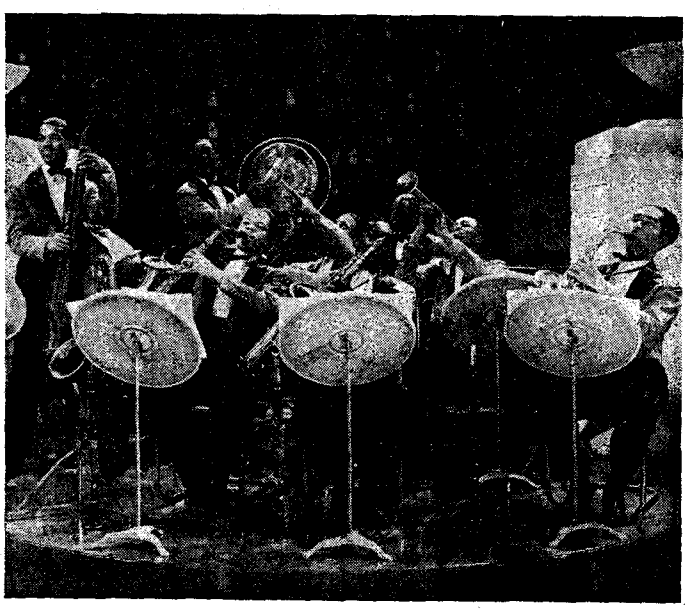

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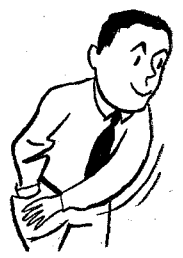

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Strachey has succeeded admirably in his attempt to give us an example of simple writing on a complicated subject. Despite the weaknesses of *Hope In America,* Strachey has given us a model of simplicity which is a challenge to all who wish to write for the masses. His comments on the American scene should be handed to friends, fellow workers, and neighbors who need to be convinced that democracy must and can be preserved.

BRUCE MINTON.

Fiery Fiorello

THIS MAN LAGUARDIA, *by Lowell Limpus and Burr Leyson. E. P. Dutton & Co. $3.*

ONE great omen of hope in our national life today is the rapid gathering of progressive forces, cutting across old party lines, into a democratic coalition against reaction. Therefore, a friendly biographical estimation at this time of Fiorello H. LaGuardia, one of the most potent leaders of this coalition, is supremely significant.

In *This Man LaGuardia,* Messrs. Limpus and Leyson present a fast-moving, newsy, well documented picture of the mayor of the City of New York. It is a story of growth and development—the growth and development of a son of an Italian immigrant army-bandmaster into a formidable and brilliant figure in American public and political life, a figure feared by tories and fascists, loved by the common people, hated by Tammany Hall.

This book is the second LaGuardia biography to appear within a year and it is distinctly the better of the two. The student of political and social trends will find it extremely valuable as a source book, for between its covers there is considerable LaGuardia correspondence heretofore unpublished and many facts in the subject's turbulent political career little known to the public.

Progressivism was traditional in the LaGuardia family. Fiorello's grandfather, Rafael Enrico LaGuardia, "had donned the 'red shirt' of Giuseppe Garibaldi and fought beside him from one end of Italy to the other." And his father, Achille, imbued in Fiorello a love and understanding of culture. Achille LaGuardia, a gifted composer and leading cornetist of his time, came to these shores with the great Patti as her arranger and accompanist. Later, as mayor of the largest city in the world, Fiorello, through free park concerts and the city radio station, gave the best of the culture and music he had learned to love to the masses of the people.

Strangely, he was first to learn to hate Tammany Hall, to which he later gave two resounding thrashings, when he was a small boy living with his parents at a Prescott, Ariz., army post. He read about Tammany corruption in the occasional copies of the New York *World* which were delivered to his home.

Fiorello was a bronco-riding youngster of sixteen when his father was called off to the Spanish-American War. And he was on his own from then on. He argued the managing editor of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* into giving him a job as a war correspondent in Tampa, Fla. At nineteen he passed a civil-service examination for the U. S. Consular Service and off he went to Budapest and then to Fiume as vice-consul. There he mastered the German and Italian languages. (Italian was never spoken in his Arizona home.) He later mastered Croatian, French, Spanish, Serbian, and Yiddish.

And it was during these days of consular service that he first clashed with the powers that be. Circumventing official regulations, he set up his own rules and compelled medical examination of immigrants on the spot in Europe, thus saving transportation fees for poor families who later would have been refused admittance at Ellis Island, and enraging the steamship owners.

And then came the experience which was to influence the whole later period of his life. He studies law, is admitted to the bar, hangs out his shingle, and enlists in the cause of organized labor during the garment strike of 1912. His biographers say: "The wiry young lawyer was everywhere. He drew up briefs and argued cases, representing his penniless clients without expectation of remuneration. He worked on committees and even served on the picket line."

You meet him again in 1914 in his first political campaign: a candidate on the Republican ticket in the Fourteenth Congressional District, shaking his fist in front of his Tammany opponent's saloon, challenging him to debate. He is defeated, but he comes back in 1916 and wins. The old guard in Congress is scandalized to have as a colleague a man who has marched on the picket line. But the war fever is on. LaGuardia, a declared pacifist, is swept with the tide. He votes for the war, deserts his seat in Congress, and shows up at the front as Major F. H. LaGuardia, pilot, U. S. Air Service.

He falls out with his Socialist friends and has many bitter clashes with them over his war position when he returns. But back in Congress he is the spectacular progressive battling for women's suffrage, against racketeering in munitions and arms, against the anti-Red espionage bill. As president of the Board of Aldermen and throughout his long years in Congress he fights for many of the measures his Socialist friends advocated.

Back in Congress again, LaGuardia was warring against the Ku Klux Klan, child labor, Republican and Democratic tories, war profiteers, high meat prices, and Red scares. He demanded immigration inspection of Archduke Boris of Russia to determine whether or not this "repudiated royalist" was likely to become a public charge.

Then we meet the more mature LaGuardia, the Fusion mayor who licked Tammany in 1933. A harassed and hard-fighting man, he is attempting to put his clean-government reform measures into practice. He is still battling with Tammany, but some of his mea-

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sures have alienated the important forces that stood at his left. The breach becomes narrow, however, as his administration pushes forward and the forces of labor unite with other progressives behind him and deliver another smashing defeat to Tammany in 1937. A registered member of the American Labor Party, he is today not only the mayor of New York, but one of the most important and dynamic leaders of progressives nationally.

The book has little to say about Mr. LaGuardia's present and most important administration. Its greatest weakness is its thinness in analysis. The authors see their subject as a brilliant and clever maneuverer, who won political fights by beating his opponents to the punch and by outsmarting them. This is true to a certain extent. But under the surface there are social and political forces at work —the progressive forces with which the man has allied himself and which made him what he is today.

One can see these forces lurking between the lines, but they are never placed boldly and squarely in proper perspective where they belong. The organization of the American Labor Party is also inaccurately presented. It is seen as a "Democratic creation—an ally of Tammany until LaGuardia walked off with it when its sponsors' back was turned." Nothing could be farther from the truth. The party was launched by a coalition of union men, liberals, and other progressives to defeat the reactionary presidential candidate Landon in 1936. It arose out of the needs of labor for broad, independent representation, never was an ally of Tammany, and the mayor did not walk off with it, but became part of it.

The biographers mistakenly insist that the official title of the young Italian organization set up by Vito Marcantonio to support LaGuardia was the "Ghibonnes." This, however, was the derisive title given the group by the Tammany enemies of LaGuardia, who wanted to make the young Italian progressives appear as tough guys and hoodlums, which the Italian word "ghibonne" signifies. The book, nevertheless, is one of the most important biographies of an American to appear this fall.

HARRY RAYMOND.

Studies of Reputations

THE WRITINGS OF E. M. FORSTER, *by Rose Macaulay. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.50.*
THE LIFE OF D. H. LAWRENCE, *by Hugh Kingsmill. Dodge Publishing Co. $2.75.*

BOTH of these books are studies of reputations, but beyond that they have little in common. One might, indeed, say that Miss Macaulay's aim is to show why E. M. Forster does deserve his reputation, whereas Mr. Kingsmill wants to prove that D. H. Lawrence doesn't deserve his. Neither, it may be pointed out at once, succeeds.

Mr. Forster published the first of his five novels in 1905 and the fifth in 1924. In spite, however, of his long silences, he has a curiously strong position in the affections of a not inconsiderable number of readers and in the opinions of his fellow-craftsmen. The work he has done commands respect, and, furthermore, even at nearly sixty, he gives the sense of impressive possibilities. More than twenty years ago one knew what to expect from Wells, say, or Galsworthy or Bennett. One still does not know what to expect from Mr. Forster.

That is Miss Macaulay's theme, and it is a worthy one. Her treatment of it, unfortunately, is less commendable. As she treats each of Forster's books in turn, mingling summaries and comments, one notes with pleasure how good the summaries are, but the comments are marked with a coyness that is almost paralyzing. Even her shrewder observations do not seem to get her anywhere. We gather that she likes the five novels Forster has written, and wishes he would write another. That is where she starts, and that, to all intents and purposes, is where she finishes.

Aimlessness is not one of the vices with which Mr. Kingsmill can be charged. His professed purpose is to take all the many books that have been written about Lawrence and reduce the facts to a clear pattern. Actually there is, behind the smooth pretense of impartiality, as deadly a hatred as has made itself felt in recent criticism. Mr. Kingsmill's violence of feeling can be compared only with that which inspired Malcolm Muggeridge's attack on Samuel Butler, and it may be worth noting that Messrs. Muggeridge and Kingsmill have at times been collaborators. Kingsmill has written some amusing, if malicious, books, notably his biography of Frank Harris, and he might have done good work in puncturing the Lawrence legend—if he had not been so determined to demolish Lawrence himself.

Regarding Lawrence as both dangerous and contemptible, he attributes his viciousness to two qualities: his sexual incompetence and his materialism. By no means clear when he talks of Lawrence's psychological peculiarities, he becomes little less than asinine when he discusses "will" and "spirit." In any case, however, one cannot take his psychological and philosophical excursions seriously, for he obviously has no interest in objective analysis. Always he attributes to Lawrence the worst motives imaginable, and he conducts his whole argument with the aid of innuendo.

Only the idolatrous few will deny that Kingsmill is occasionally correct. The picture of Lawrence and his followers that emerges from the memoirs of the latter is, to put it mildly, disillusioning. Oscar Wilde once said, "Every great man nowadays has his disciples, and it is always Judas who writes the biography." Lawrence's apostolic band seems to have been composed almost equally of Judases and jackasses, both articulate, and between them they not only have provided plenty of material for a Kingsmill but have intensified the doubts of more dispassionate students. Yet,

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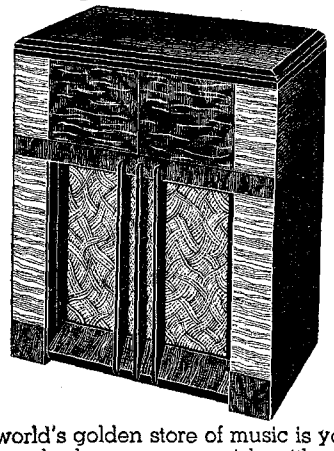

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when one grants all of Lawrence's weaknesses, the frequency with which he transcended them becomes the more remarkable. He was often a fool and sometimes, in his muddled way, a dangerous reactionary, but to say merely that is not, as Kingsmill would like us to believe, to do Lawrence justice.

Compared with Kingsmill's book, Miss Macaulay's seems innocuous and almost commendable. Yet, if its inadequacies are not so shocking, they are nonetheless regrettable. Both Lawrence and Forster deserve better books. Vastly dissimilar in temperament, they have certain similarities in outlook—compare, for example, *Where Angels Fear to Tread* and *The Lost Girl*—that ought not to be ignored. Both of them say something significant about and for our times. What it is Mr. Kingsmill has not tried to ask, and Miss Macaulay has indulged only in random surmises.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

Brief Reviews

METROPOLIS: A STUDY OF URBAN COMMUNITIES, *by Howard Woolston. D. Appleton-Century Co. $2.75.*

This book will add nothing to the stature of the author, a liberal professor of sociology at the University of Washington. Although he has investigated at first hand all the great metropolitan centers of the world, and has lived on the edges of tempestuous maelstroms of war and revolution, Woolston remains an isolated, self-conscious, pre-war academician. Pity the poor students who will be obliged to purchase this condescending text for their courses in what is quaintly called "urban problems." They will find neither scholarship nor wisdom, nor a method of grappling with facts or with social situations. Sterile generalizations are built into a planless static, fragile scaffold. The factual documentation is vapid and dated. Reality is so distilled that nothing is left but hot air.

The entire book is a striking example of what intellectual isolation, through non-participation, can do to the academic mind. ALAN BAER.

THE DANUBE FLOWS THROUGH FASCISM, *by William Van Til. Chas. Scribner's Sons. $2.75.*

Mr. and Mrs. Van Til, an American university professor and his wife, realized, like other sensitive people, that guide-conducted tours through Europe are as unrevealing as the average travel book, so they bought themselves a *faltboot* and started down the Danube. They had heard terrible things about fascism, but they wanted to see for themselves. They saw. Van Til's comments, if precious at times, are sound and interesting. With no preconceptions on the matter, the Van Tils came at once to hate fascism. Unfortunately, however, the reluctance to condemn without first observing ends with fascism; and Van Til finds himself able to slur Communism without benefit of a cruise down the Volga or Dneiper. RICHARD H. ROVERE.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Two Pictures About Doctors

Two new pictures about the medical profession present themselves as the best movie shows this week. Both are by MGM, one a quota picture from England, made from Dr. A. J. Cronin's novel, *The Citadel;* and the other *The Young Dr. Kildare,* made in Hollywood, but lacking almost all the usual clichés of plot and characterization. *The Citadel* is the more important because it goes deeper and wider into the problem of the honest doctor plunged into the chicanery of medicine.

King Vidor, a good director neglected by Hollywood, takes Dr. Cronin's stinging rebukes against the evils that have grown up in medicine—the workers' health ignored; occupational hazards like silicosis; superstitious hostility to independent research; "fashionable" practitioners bleeding rich hypochondriacs almost as thoroughly as a medieval barber; fee-splitting; phony vitamin lamps; absurd consultations—the mumbo-jumbo and the magic gadgetry that seem inherited directly from the witch-doctor. Dr. Cronin has made a workmanlike diagnosis of this knavery, working with his rubber gloves off.

Having diagnosed the symptoms with clinical accuracy, Dr. Cronin fails to write a prescription. He flirts with the idea of socialized or group medicine but never takes the leap. He thinks things are in terrible shape but he hopes people will stop acting this way. This is a little less than good physic for social ills. Robert Donat performs admirably in the role of Dr. Manson, who begins his career in a factory town as a hireling of another medico, goes on to become a salaried doctor for a Welsh miners' union, a starving practitioner in London, and finally a society doctor, preying on the mentally sick rich. The death of an old friend under the bungling scalpel of a quack colleague brings back Dr. Manson's old idealism and the picture ends with a trial for malpractice before the British Medical Union, in which Dr. Manson defends himself in a thrilling speech.

The people and the settings of Dr. Manson's early proletarian *milieu* are as solid as the best English documentary. The presence in *The Citadel* of these gritty, genteel factory towns, beside which an American mining community seems quite gaudy, mocks the bourgeois analysis of Dr. Cronin. There's something rottener here—defeated strikes, an aged, hereditary factory system, the workers themselves tainted by the hypocritical manners of the ruling caste. There is a deep sickness in the very society, aggravated by the despicable *Weltanschauung* brought to polished perfection by Mr. Neville Chamberlain. It is an ill that Dr. Cronin has not named. It was set down by a German refugee who frequented the British Museum in the sixties.

The English film is geared up directly to the governmental policies of the moment. The workers' health is such a concern to the industrialists and the generals that medical reform has long been an acknowledged need. The British tory recognizes the simple truth that you have to keep workers alive to exploit them properly. The lag between their health ideas and ours come out strongly in the fact that such a forthright picture could be made. What seems revolution itself to the American Medical Association is just good business in England. We can well profit from the propaganda aid for our embryo health-program provided by this expert and absorbing film.

Lew Ayres, in the title role of *Young Dr. Kildare,* does a fine job of restrained playing in a picture that is quiet, honest, and refreshing. Upon graduation from medical school the young doctor leaves his hometown to go into a big New York hospital as an interne. Social implications are avoided but the script develops real interest in the purely professional vicissitudes of Dr. Kildare. Lionel Barrymore plays an old crotchety genius, Dr. Gillespie, who guides the younger man's career. I have a strong distaste for the lazy, stereotyped stuff Barrymore has been doing, but he, too, seems to give something extra to this picture.

WHILE WE ARE WAITING for *Prof. Mamlock,* the Soviet film on Hitler anti-Semitism, the Cameo is marking time with *Danton,* the first German film to be banned by Hitler. The picture is a literal version of Georg Büchner's play, *Danton's Death,* which Orson Welles promises to bring to Broadway in the near future. The thesis of the film, one of heavy sympathy for Danton at the expense of a villainously caricatured Robespierre, tells not enough and that not enough with considerable distortion. The period of the schism between Danton and Robespierre over the basic direction of the revolution involved many deeper issues. The picture gives no hint of these forces—Danton, the bourgeois revolutionist, losing his stomach for the logical revolutionary drive led by Robespierre, leader of the left wing, and Danton making common issue with the conservatives in their program of halting the revolution so as to leave the rising capitalist class in full control. The picture ends with Danton's trial, in which the masses are represented as being behind him in his fight. This is untrue to the events, for Robespierre was the accepted representative of the popular masses, however possible it may be that Danton's claque crowded the trial chambers.

Charles Martin

Fritz Kortner, as Danton, plays it in the grand style to make a picture loaded with excitement and energy, as extra good in the acting as it is extra poor in the history. The picture is entirely in German with no English dialogue titles, merely four insertions of synopses at the beginnings of the acts of the play. In a film almost entirely made up of speech-making this is inexcusable on the part of the Cameo. A revival of Pudovkin's classic, *The End of St. Petersburg,* bolsters up the bill.

Service De Luxe, a New Universal farce, has a good gag idea in it—a coldly efficient girl who runs a service bureau which provides all things to all men from wedding arrangements to getting Junior reinstated in Yale. The idea is developed in a mildly amusing way with Mischa Auer scoring the best laughs.

A new colored picture album of airplanes, *Men With Wings,* covers aeronautical history of aviation in hands of enlightened modern enterprise. The air scenes are noisy and handsome but the plot involving Ray Milland, Fred MacMurray, and Louise Campbell is merely noisesome. The use of technicolor is justified in the air scenes, director William Wellman having made excellent use of clouds, a camouflage, and the funeral pyres of crippled machines.

The first moving pictures of the destruction of Guernica will be shown at midnight, Saturday, November 5, at the Roosevelt Theatre, for the benefit of the Committee For Basque Refugees. JAMES DUGAN.

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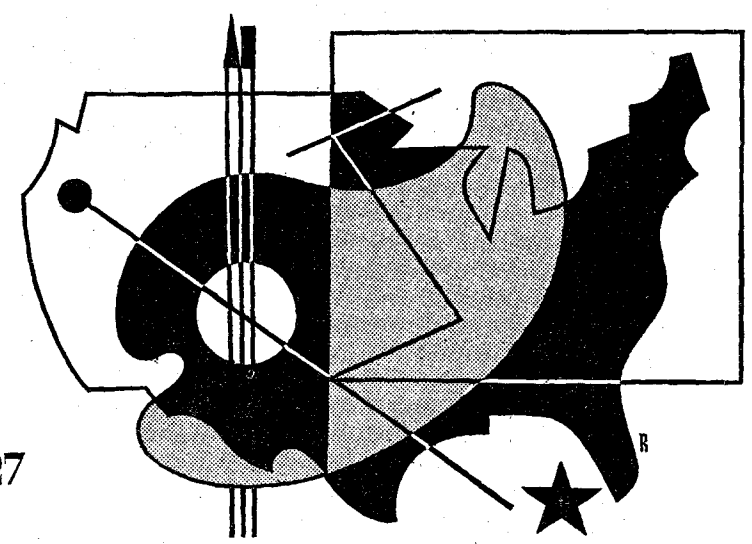

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Sour Week On Broadway

BROADWAY is standing pat this week with the big October openings. *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* is playing to standing room only, the sound and fury of the argument over *Fabulous Invalid* still agitates the actors' bars, and *Sing Out the News* keeps full houses chuckling.

Nothing of any importance turned up last week. On the contrary, in fact. Miss Eva Le Gallienne opened in the season's dreariest opus, an overstuffed item called *Madame Capet*. The play closed last Saturday amid a welter of yawns and Mr. Eddie Dowling the producer is stuck with some expensive scenery and pretty costumes. Miss Le Gallienne, for the record, was simply terrible as the poor old French queen who lost her head when the nasty revolutionists went berserk. Someday, somebody is going to write a play showing Madame Capet for what she really was, a silly, vicious, useless, meddling, extravagant, heartless parasite with about as much reason for existence as a fly. *That* will be an opening worth covering.

THE PUBLIC USE OF ARTS COMMITTEE, which was responsible for the widely publicized campaign last year for art in the subways, has entered a new field. A plan has been put into operation for a City-Wide Community Theatre Circuit which will bring to the scattered neighborhoods of Greater New York the living stage at prices scaled down to the admission rates of neighborhood movies. The committee is not providing the actual productions as they come from the Federal Theatre Project, but will select those plays in the repertoire of the FTP or other producers which are best suited to economical presentation. A test performance has already been held for representatives of a wide group of church, union, and club representatives, of the first bill, consisting of four one-act plays, *Foundered, One-Car Wedding, Jobs Inc.,* and *The Informer*. Watch for these dramas in your neighborhood about December 1.

RUTH MCKENNEY.

THE GREAT CZECH COMEDIANS—the greatest comic artists in Europe—Voskovec and Werich, are coming to the United States, under the management of the William Morris Agency, and that is cause for rejoicing. Their forced emigration is not the least of Czechoslovakia's losses and grief; their theater made Prague into a Mecca for actors, playwrights, and mere theater-lovers throughout the continent. Unfortunately, they were nowhere as well known in this country, mainly because so few Americans on tour ever reached as far as Prague, or else stayed in Prague for no more than a night en route to the Soviet Union. But now they are coming and we will be able to make up for lost time.

I do not pretend to be able to give any professional description of the V + W art. I saw them in May. It was all in Czech, of

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which I understood nothing. For a while, a Prague journalist interpreted for me but then it got tiresome because the two great clowns needed no interpreter. Their style is unique. They use the revue form but each skit or scene is tied to the next by a common theme. The material is almost completely political in substance. V + W are afraid of nothing, no matter how complex, profound, or important. But they have found the secret of taking political subject-matter and conveying it to large masses of people, most of them from the middle class, in riotously funny, ribald, witty, and penetrating form. They use girls, songs, dances, and rough-house, but mainly they use themselves. They write, direct, and act everything.

I had a brief conversation with Werich, slightly the older of the two, and told him that I thought Americans would go wild over their stuff. They will. For the V + W humor is American to the core. It resembles, from different aspects, the Marx brothers, the Ritz brothers, Charlie Chaplin, and Jimmie Savo. Probably you don't believe this but it is true. Herbert Kline, formerly the editor of *New Theatre* magazine, was in Prague at the time making a film and he felt this way about them too. In fact, had V + W not decided to come to America in person, they would have come via Kline's film. He told me that they had agreed to permit him to put one of their most famous satires into the picture.

The theater has a fascinating history. Voskovec, I believe it was, had dabbled in the Dada movement in Paris during the early post-war years and had developed a closely related style. A number of Dadaist hangovers are still present, especially in what is known as the V + W *specialité de la maison,* which, roughly, amounts to a conversation between the two, surcharged with wit and satire, before a curtain backdrop. On their return to Prague, they progressively subordinated the purely Dadaist features of their art to political and social satire. In 1927, they founded their own theater and they packed them in from then on. TAC, which was instrumental in bringing them across, should be given a golden scroll for the service. T. D.

Abraham Tobias

He Wants To Be Alone

MR. YEHUDI MENUHIN, who but a short time ago was known to the world as a small boy with a great talent for the violin, has now signalized his maturity by sticking out his neck and hollering that he just wants to be an artist, and won't join any nasty unions. The American Guild of Musical Artists (known generally as AGMA) was incorporated April 9, 1936, by a group of artists which included such illustrious names as Heifetz, Bonelli, Tibbett (now president of the organization), and Zimbalist. Its purpose, which showed a healthy attitude on the part of organizers, is "to foster the interests of musical artists in America, and to secure equitable and desirable conditions for musical artists in all phases of their professional activity."

Mr. Menuhin contends that he will lose his freedom as an artist, if he joins such an organization, and says: "I have always sympathized with organized labor, but I have no interests requiring collective bargaining. I am a free lance, and my art belongs purely to the concert stage. I feel the right of the individual in a democratic country is involved in this demand [that he join AGMA as a requisite before performing with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra on November 3 and 4], and that my freedom as an artist is at stake." On nearly every point, Menuhin stands on an untenable position. First of all, he is no more an artist than Heifetz, Flagstad, Melchior, Elman, Zimbalist, Spalding, and others, all of whom are members of AGMA and obviously do not feel that they have ceased to exist as free artists. Once that point is clear, it is necessary for him to give more than lip service to organized labor, because his one reason (apparently) for resisting it would seem to be an egocentric one.

Menuhin's unfortunate statement is cut from the same cloth as the caviling of the American newspaper publishers against the organization of journalistic professionals; although the young violinist's own position is veiled in ambiguity his statement gives comfort to the anti-labor elements, and promises no good for his future career.

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Before me, on my desk, are about sixty letters, one day's contribution to the revived I Like America drive. Most of them are from old subscribers who have made it their business to secure new subscribers. With nearly all of them come letters expressing interest in the drive. The common denominator of all is: New Masses must continue.

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